MAS
F16

THE LIBRARY OF

Thomas Verner Moore, D. D.,

Stuart Professor of Systematic Theology, 1906-1926

PRESENTED BY HIM

to the

SAN FRANCISCO THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

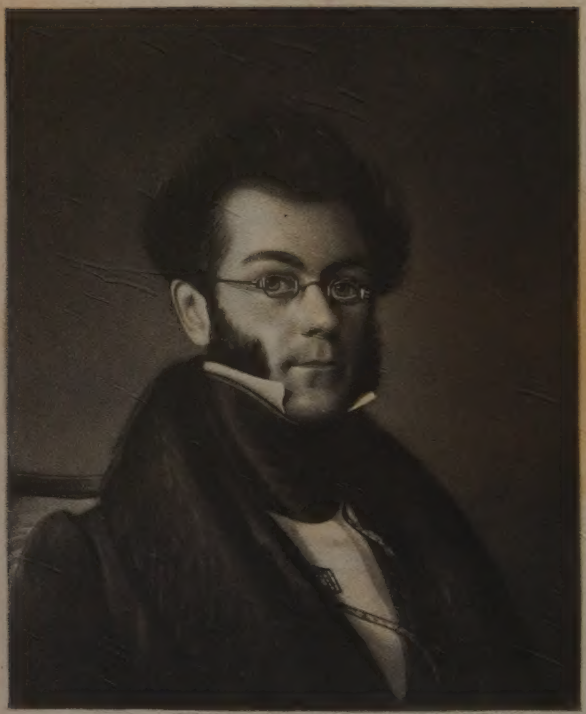
San Anselmo, California

~~Alcove~~ 6

~~Stack~~ 2

~~Shelf~~ e

MEZZANINE



Eng. by A.H. Ritchie N.Y.

W. & L. humble Servt

Sumner L. Fairfield

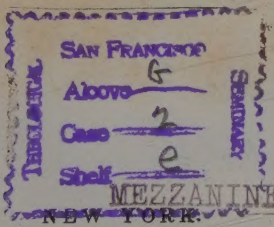
THE LIFE

OF

SUMNER LINCOLN FAIRFIELD, ESQ.

IN ONE VOLUME.

BY JANE FAIRFIELD.



NEW YORK:
PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHOR.
1848.

GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL UNION LIBRARY
San Francisco Theological Seminary Branch
2 Kensington Road, San Anselmo, CA 94960

PS
1654
F3
Z7
1848

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1846, by
JANE FAIRFIELD,
in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, for the Southern District of New York.

TO

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK, Esq.

IN TESTIMONY OF THE HIGHEST RESPECT

FOR HIS GENIUS AS A POET, AND EMINENT ACQUIREMENTS,

THIS WORK IS DEDICATED

By JANE FAIRFIELD.

TO THE PUBLIC.

It is by no means consistent for one so nearly allied as the wife, to write a biography of the husband. There are many things that, under any consideration, she should not be induced to explain; her feelings are often overcome by the bitterness of grief, or acted upon by sympathy or benevolence. "Facts, not opinions," should be the motto of every candid historian; it therefore requires a biographer who shall try a cause not from malice, or excuse from favor.

I have endeavored, in as concise a manner as possible, to lay before the public a few of the events in the life, and to analyze, as well as I was able, the mind and character of my late husband. The necessity of expediting the publication of the work, induced me to take upon myself the responsibility of the task; and as it is my first attempt at authorship, (and I trust it will be the last,) I hope I shall be forgiven for all absurdities of style and composition.

Opposite views are often taken of the same events and characters, by persons of differently constituted minds; and though I may differ from the multitude in regard to the prominent points of character in relation to the poet, I feel quite confident that there are a few among those *who knew him best*, who will coincide in my opinions. How far I have succeeded, rests with their better judgment.

March 22, 1846. JANE FAIRFIELD.

THE LIFE

OF

SUMNER LINCOLN FAIRFIELD, ESQ.

CHAPTER I.

Sumner Lincoln Fairfield was the only son of Dr. Abner Fairfield. He was born on the 25th of June 1803, in the mountain town of Warwick, Massachusetts, not far from the frontiers of the State. Of the family, or the ancestors of his father, little is known. It is certain, however, that they were French descent; since the Fairfield name originated from the name of Beauchamp. It is believed there were three brothers of the name came from France at the time of the Revolution, and settled in New England. I regret the vagueness, and uncertainty I feel on this subject, since there is nothing more agreeable than to be able to trace to a certainty, a line of one's ancestry. This, in a country like ours, made and mixed up as it is from among the nations of the earth, could scarcely be possible.

While yet an infant, the parents, with their only child, removed to a small town in the State of New York, named Athens; on the beautiful Hudson. Here, not long before the death of Dr. Fairfield, a daughter was added, who, in a short time, became to her brother almost his only solace.

Dr. Abner Fairfield died in October, 1806, in the thirty-second year of his age. He fell a victim to his responsible profession, during the ravages of a pestilential epidemic. The mother, as is often the case in widowhood, found refuge in the home of her father a plain, industrious, worthy yeoman, in a rustic spot, near the village of Western, Worcester County, Mass.

Here, among the romantic hills and valleys of the *Father-land* of *Freedom*, passed the earlier years of the poet. Few opportunities for mental cultivation were afforded, for he was put on an equality with the children of the family, and *all* who lived on the estate of Mr. Lincoln were accustomed to labor. But their dwelling became a refuge for the broken in spirit; and the widow and the fatherless, for four brief years, found much to console them in the sympathy of relatives and friends.

At the end of this period, a new affliction was impending; Marietta, who was now in her fifth year, and had grown in mind and form, beautiful as the first flowers of spring, was seized on the first of September, 1810, by a fatal malady, which, within a few days, closed her unoffending career, and wafted her spotless spirit far beyond the taint and trouble of this mortal life. This was a severe and bitter trial, for she was the idol of her grand-parents, and, indeed, all who knew her. Her brother was inconsolable at this bereavement, and continued through life to mourn the loss of this radiant and lovely being. He was often sad—most sad when contemplating the loss of *both* father and sister. In a poem, written in manhood, entitled the "Father's Legacy," he shows how deep were his feelings on this subject.

From this severe trial, the poor boy seemed roused to a sense of his situation. The loss of his father, almost in infancy, and his sister, which speedily followed, produced in his young mind, by nature reflective, those gloomy forebodings of the future, which haunted his imagination, and dwelt upon his heart. During that epoch, it was difficult to find occupation which might cheat the days of calamity of their weary length. While Marietta lived, they blended their enjoyments together; they ran up and down the brows of the hills, which skirted the beautiful country around the dwelling, where lived their grand-parents; they plucked the roses on the mead, and loved the hours that were their own.

CHAPTER II.

The most fervent affections are those which are least divided. The poor boy being left alone with his mother, (consequently, could love none but her,) loved her with a fervor that scarcely admitted of comparison. She became the only protector of his childhood, the partaker of his sorrows, and his only society.

Dr. Fairfield died a poor man, and, in his last moments, requested that his only son should receive, if possible, a collegiate education. This *last* request was the sole project that held possession of the poor boy's mind. He beheld in their strongest light, many of the impediments he must surmount. The ardour of his wishes encouraged him, and he felt convinced he should overcome them all. The project he kept profoundly secret; resolved not to mention it till the moment of his departure should arrive.

The ambitious boy, at the age of twelve years, thoughtful, melancholy, and lonely, without the common necessaries of life, to fulfil the expiring wish of his father, left the spot that had long been the dwelling of his childhood, to join the grammar school at Hadley, Massachusetts. He knew nothing beyond his rudiments, yet, *in less than a year*, through application and most intense study, he was fitted for college, and entered Brown University, September, 1817, *in advance of his class.*

This institution was then under the direction of President Messer. Those of his class-mates who sur vive, have become able and distinguished men in the departments they occupy. Mr. Caswell, whose mild and bland manner, and whose excellent and benevolent heart has endeared him to all who know him, for several years has distinguished himself as an able professor in the high station he fills in the college from which he is a graduate. Longfellow has been admired for his belle-lettre attainments ; his fortune and success in life, has given him the ascendancy to which his genius entitles him. The Rev. Benjamin Cutler has been long venerated and beloved, as a learned, faithful, and Christian minister, in the church he serves. Between these men and their fellow-student, there existed the most amicable and kind feeling. It could not well be otherwise—he sought to injure no one. With a heart alive to all the sensibilities of our nature—modest and unobtrusive, though disposed always to think well of himself, with a lofty mind, and a pure ambition, it was not his disposition to court applause, yet his love of approbation was so strong as to create in his young mind an attempt at distinction.

From the first ferment of his boyish dreams, he had nothing in his favor, neither competence, birth, or connexions ; and he began to feel the world a mighty stage, on which, it is true, you cannot establish a footing without merit, and without labour.

He had not been in college but a little while, ere the consequences of unmitigated application brought on a severe illness, which almost terminated life. As soon as his health permitted, he began to aid in his

support by teaching school in the neighborhood of his college. All exertion, however, was in vain ; and in the midst of his erudite pursuits, at the age of seventeen, he was compelled to resign his eager hopes and dazzling dreams, and depart to mingle and struggle with the cold and chilling world.

The two subsequent years were spent in Georgia and Carolina, as principal of academies. Here, in the solitude of country life, his poetic imaginings awoke within his uncommuning heart. Better, far, for rest and peace to himself, and those to whom in after-life he became allied, that they had slumbered on forever !

Two pamphlets of rhymes were published, during his eighteenth year, from which he ever after shrunk from reading, but which—their only merit—contributed, through the kindness of friends, in augmenting limited means, and thereby added to the comforts of his mother, who, at that time, was suffering under painful and protracted illness.

Shortly after this period, it was deemed expedient that the author should fix his mind upon the ministry, as his profession. He soon made up his mind to apply himself to the study of Theology, and passed some time with the Rev. Mr. Cranston, of Christ's Church Savannah.

Before he had completed his studies, this clergyman left Savannah, to visit his friends in Middletown Connecticut, where, in 1822, he died. This misfortune sealed the future fate of the poet. He gave up, at once, his determination to take orders, left Savannah, and sailed for New York.

Here, new obstacles occurred. After a lapse of

months, without means or friends, (for to be poor is to be friendless—the terms are often synonymous,) the poor man's bark seemed cast upon a stormy sea. All but intense feeling and high thought was cast aside. All ordinary pursuits seemed vain and worthless, and for the evanescent rainbow glimpses of imagination, all the paths that lead to opulence and power, were forever abandoned.

CHAPTER III.

"The pain which is felt when we are transplanted from our own native soil, when the living branch is cut from the parent tree, is one of the most poignant which we have to endure through life. There are after-griefs which wound more deeply, and leave behind them scars never to be effaced; which bruise the spirit and sometimes break the heart; but never do we feel so keenly the want of love, the necessity of being loved, and the sense of utter desertion, as when we *first* leave the haven of home, and are, as it were, pushed off upon the stream of life."

The decision was made. Literature henceforth, he conceived, was to distinguish him from the world. In this belief he went forth; and though he was advised to forsake a path that could not lead to one of roses, and told by others, who had already embarked in this unprofitable pursuit, that, the moment he attempted distinction, he would be abused, calumniated, and sigh for his old obscurity; for this he cared not—he thought of nothing but the glorious fate he had in view; to have an influence on the vast and ever-growing mind of such a country as ours; to be the medium of circulating new ideas, in a new world; to become the pioneer, in so good a cause, of upholding the "glorious priesthood" of the honest and the beautiful. This was the highest ambition of the poor scholar.

For this purpose, he determined and decided upon a trans-atlantic voyage, to visit Europe for a time This was happily accomplished, and in December, 1825, he set sail from New York to London. Upon his arrival in the great Metropolis, wild with delight, he felt inspired with all he saw and heard. His young, ardent, and enthusiastic spirit, went out in all its glorious imaginings; he sought the abodes of the poets; he communed with Wordsworth and Campbell; he began to taste, for the first time, the transport, the intoxication of an author; and though he had written but few things, he fancied that he was formed to do something in the world, and in his young mind decided he was to become a man of books, rather than a man of deeds.

Perhaps no young man ever left America with prouder credentials; these introduced him at once to the publishers of literary periodicals. He was soon solicited to write for the "Oriental Herald;" a work then edited by Mr. Buckingham, who has since been a lecturer in this country, on his travels in the East The following letter contains Mr. Buckingham's proposals to the author:

GROVE END ROAD, St. John's Wood.

DEAR SIR:—I return the "Lord of the Wild," as I should prefer inserting the "Cities of the Plain," in the *Herald*, if room can he found for either. In this case, however, I think it will be advisable to retrench in a few places, not amounting, perhaps, to more than fifty lines in the whole; which, if you will entrust to my discretion, I shall do with all due regard to the unity and effect of the poem. This is a privilege

which we find it necessary to exercise on all productions submitted to us; and one to which, I have no doubt, you will readily assent. Indeed, without this it would be impossible to perform the duty of editor satisfactorily, or adjust the various and conflicting considerations of length, style, subject, and so forth into one harmonious whole.

The rate of remuneration we have already fixed at half a guinea per printed page; and the usual rule is, I believe, that payment be made immediately on the publication of the article inserted. If these conditions be acceptable, I shall retain the "Cities of the Plain." and give it the earliest possible insertion.

I am, dear sir,

Yours very truly,

J. S. Buckingham.

March 26, 1825.

For the "Oriental Herald," he wrote his poem entitled "The Cities of the Plain." For all his writings while abroad, he received a half guinea a page. This offer, in the setting out of his career, revived his hopes, and encouraged his heart.

"The Cities of the Plain" was eulogized by the press, and read by the clergy as a great production for an *American Poet.*

Soon after its publication, Joanna Baillie sent for him to breakfast with her. The following note was received by the poet:

Holly-bush Hill, Hampstead,
Friday, Feb. 7, 1825.

Mrs. Joanna Baillie presents her compliments to Mr. Fairfield, and requests the favor of his company to breakfast, next Monday, at half-past nine, which

she hopes will not be inconveniently early. She is sorry that engagements and other circumstances oblige her to name so distant a day for having the pleasure of receiving Mr. Fairfield, but trusts that his residence in Hampstead will continue beyond that time. She takes the liberty of retaining his small volume, in which are much of the feelings and imaginations of a poet, till Monday morning, when she will restore it to the author, with many thanks.

He enjoyed life when among corresponding natures; he pursued the path most suited to himself, without declaring it to be the best for others. He was a little hard, perhaps, upon the errors that belong to vanity and conceit, not to those that have their source in great natures and generous thoughts. Among his characteristics, was a profound admiration for England.

His own country he half loved, yet half disdained; he loved a republic, yet disliked the mob. He could not bear that the *ignorant and illiterate should rule;* he subscribed to no aristocracy but intelligence and intellect. I am reminded of a conversation that took place (some time after our marriage) between my husband and a man who boasted of family distinction. "For myself," said he, "I could not be proud of a pedigree, but of some historical quarterings in my ancestry, of the blood of Scholars, that runs in my veins. It is the same kind of pride that an American may feel in belonging to a country that has produced a Bryant and a Halleck." He never felt that vulgar pride that disdains a want of birth in others, and he cared not whether his friend or his wife were descended from a queen or a peasant.

CHAPTER IV.

Months passed away, and our young poet found himself delighted and caressed by all into whose society it was his good fortune to mingle. He published his tour in Europe, and contributed the articles to a literary periodical then edited by James G. Brooks, Esq., in New York. In his remarks on England, perhaps he was just; and though he admired many of her institutions, loved her antiquity, her literature, and system, which is so perfect, he could not refrain from expressing his abhorrence to the conduct of the clergy, their indulgencies, and want of religion; perhaps, in this respect, he carried his feelings too far; he looked for, and expected too great perfection in men, who possess dispositions in common with mankind. He contrasted the merits of the clergy of both countries; he could not find abroad, the self-sacrificing, spiritual, and moral men, that as a mass characterize our nation. Upon this subject he expressed himself too freely. It was his practice through life to disclaim openly against imposition, from however high a source. This frankness, without judgment, led him into many difficulties, and was the primary cause of creating to himself, early in life, many enemies.

From England he went to France. He made his abode for a short time in Paris; here, his feelings underwent another change. Paris is a delightful

place to the gay and idle; but to the literary man, Paris is not equal to England, or Germany. There is too much of the flippant, and not enough of the grave, to interest one whose feelings were sad in the sunshine, and gay in storms. In the midst of the revelries, and gayeties that surrounded him, when his heart was weighed down in the scale, it was his mind that restored the balance.

His principal letters of introduction were to Mr. James Brown, our amiable and excellent Minister Plenipotentiary to France, and the good La Fayette; by them he was received in a kind and hospitable manner, and in company with our distinguished dramatist, John Howard Payne, attended several fêtes given by Mr. Brown, at the palace of Luxembourg.

The love La Fayette bore our young American is affectionately expressed in several letters in my possession, that were sent to him while a resident in France.

From Paris he went to Versailles, and had his suite of apartments opposite the Palace. The scenes of terror that were enacted during the terrible revolution of France, and overthrow of Louis XVI., were subjects for his imagination and pen.

"What a luxury is there in that first love of the muse; that process by which we give a palpable form to the beautiful dreams which have flitted across us; the inspiration which we invoke in the sanctuary of our still closets, with the wand of the simple pen!"

While in Versailles, he wrote "Pere La Chaise," and "Westminster Abbey;" two of his most admired pieces.

At Versailles he continued to write. The scenery

around, and the quiet, harmonized with his feelings; he read and thought much. Removed at a distance from Paris, where dwelt many of his American and English friends, he lived almost in solitude, so far as familiar companionship is concerned. His ideas and *memories now crowded thick upon him.*

A short time previous to his journey to Europe, he formed an attachment to a young lady residing in a small town called Derby, near New Haven. I believe it was reciprocated on the part of the lady, but an unfortunate engagement to a relative of her name, prevented their union. This was a severe and bitter trial; he strove to conceal, though he could not conquer the emotion; and like all men, *he loved more*, because the object could not be obtained. The image of his favorite pursued, it haunted him, it came on him unawares, in solitude, in crowds. It was that youthful and luxurious bloom of pure and holy thought, which is the first blossom of genius. Struggle after struggle ensued, and time only served to engrave more deeply the ineradicable impression. He was strong in the belief that if he returned to America, and found the lady unmarried, he should overcome every barrier that might exist to their union.

With this intention, forgetting for a season his high and noble purposes, he insisted upon leaving France, and immediately took passage, and returned to New York, in July, 1826. He soon ascertained that the young lady was married, but *never forgot* his first romantic passion.

CHAPTER V.

It is the contemplation of a different scene that the course of the author's life now conducts us. On his return to his native land, he was greeted, applauded, flattered, and courted, until the novelty had passed, by his countrymen, and countrywomen. He had achieved honors that could not be conferred on him at home; for, alas, the Americans are a *vain*, not a *proud* people. They see with other people's eyes, hear with other people's ears, decide with other people's judgment, and parrot forth other people's opinions.

I love my country, though I regret the *want* of *independence*, character, and *manner* of the Americans. Well would it be for us to vie with England in prizing what is really valuable at home; this we can do, without depreciating the good that comes from abroad.

As soon as our author had exchanged the usual greetings that pass between young men and their companions, he began to feel, at the early age of twenty-two, a disappointed and desolate man. It is true he had a mother, and though her affections were centered in this only child, she had no knowledge of a proper course necessary to be pursued in his *domestic* education. Instead of cultivating in his mind a manly and independent spirit, she sought and succeeded in impressing him, from a child, that he was utterly help-

less, and dependent entirely upon her exertions. Had he possessed a guide from his youth, to have instilled in his mind that confidence in himself, which makes even the boy manly and firm, he would undoubtedly have mixed with the world, and occupied himself with the aims and pursuits of others.

Why is it that poets must be children? Why? but that he who dispenses his gifts, does not prefer to shower them all upon one head. If it were possible for men of genius to have intimate knowledge of men, as well as nature, to realize flesh and blood, to leave the skies and stars, and become familiar with tradesmen and merchants, their way in life would be less solitary—prejudices and envies would die off; they would find in the deep heart of the world sympathy with their motives and career. Some coarse and homely pursuit of practical life, would leave their minds repose, while it would bring vigor and health to their bodies, and render thought much less painful.

As I have said, the author began to feel a disappointed and solitary man. He had in him a spirit of emulation—sometimes exasperated by the sarcasms of foes, at others cheered by the applause of friends. The desire of fame was getting to be the habit of his existence. With what he had written he was dissatisfied. When in these seasons of despondency, he felt that his frame could not support his mind; that he could no longer execute what he conceived and desired.

Almost immediately upon his return to New York, he published a volume of Poems, entitled "The Sisters of Saint Clara," a tale of Portugal, written while a resident at Versailles. The edition was small, and as

it is not embraced among his later publications, it has been seldom seen, or read. The poet's high regard and veneration for the learning and literary attainments of Mr. Everett, then a professor in Cambridge University, induced him to dedicate to him this poem. The following letter was the reply from this distinguished person :

CAMBRIDGE, February 9, 1826.

DEAR SIR :—I received a short time since, your polite letter, and afterwards, the poem you were good enough to send me. Numerous avocations of a nature to leave me scarce any leisure, have prevented my earlier acknowledgement of your attention. I cannot but be flattered at this public mark of respect which you have done me the honor to pay me, in the dedication of your poem, and wish it were in my power, in any way that could show my proper sense of its value, to requite this compliment. From any public tribute to the merit of your production, you have fairly disabled me ; as I could gain no credit for disinterestedness in commending a poem, to which my own name is thus honorably appended. I must content myself, therefore, with privately saying to you, that "I have read it," (namely, the Sisters of Saint Clara,) "with great interest. The story is excellent, the incidents brought out with skill, the versification easy, often highly so, and the range of poetical imagery wide and lofty." I have never been in the habit of addressing those of my friends who have thought it worth while to ask my opinion, to look to poetry as a means of attaining all the objects which, in your letter, you intimate that you are bound to pursue. A professional career of some kind, is certainly, in this country, a

better resource. Had you nothing in view but poetical fame, I think you have given abundant proof, in this and your earlier efforts, of being able to attain a gratifying share.

Renewing my thanks for your polite attentions, and with the assurance that it would give me pleasure to be of service to you,

I am, dear sir,

Your obliged servant,

EDWARD EVERETT.

CHAPTER VI.

It is quite impossible to trace, step by step, the incidents of the life of one so fraught with changes: I believe that part of biography which would interest the most, is generally omitted. "Thought, hope, sorrow, fear, how prolix would they be, if they might each tell their hourly tale! Alas! our most accurate confessions are a most miserly abridgment of a hurried and confused summary."

It was about three weeks after the arrival of Mr. Fairfield from Europe, when he accidentally met me at a small party at the house of a young friend I then had, residing at Jersey City. *We met;* two little words, and yet how *many volumes* do they suggest to my care-worn and troubled heart. A few brief years have passed since that event found me, on a bright and sunny afternoon, *how gay and happy*, few now can know, for the companions of my childhood, many of them, have gone to that sleep "which knows no waking." I have still sweet visions of those lost and dim remembered days.

The time sped rapidly the few days that intervened ere the proposal was made, and the day appointed for the marriage ceremony—second only in solemnity to the burial service, to which it is often a preliminary September 20th, 1826, we were wedded in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

My maiden name was Frazee. My father was de

scended from the Scotch; our ancestors dwelt among the "banks and braes" of that beautiful and romantic country. Of my parents I have much to be proud. My father was never the proprietor of large possessions; he was celebrated for *industry*, *frugality*, and a high regard for honor and honesty; a supporter of independent principles, and *valued* himself on independence. He was a democrat after the "old school." Washington was never more loyal in his love for his country. He died in October, 1844, in the seventieth year of his age. His career was closed *as an honest man*—"the noblest work of God."

Of my beloved mother, who still survives, for all her maternal love, I retain a spiritual memory. She, indeed, has been my good angel; how often, in seasons of sorrow, have I contemplated her blessed form, that by the rays of some flickering light, seemed to bend over her desolate child. With a heart full of tenderness, she has ever been ready to sacrifice herself for the good of others. She is by nature religious, possessing all the graces of mind and person. Few women more deservedly merit the title of gentlewoman. I pray death may not soon dissolve this tie.

I must now beg pardon of the public, if in the future I am found sometimes making mention of myself. Here, the task of pleasure-writing ceases. The future is fraught, not with fancies, or shadows; but realities, if told, would seem falsehoods. Indeed, I am at a loss to know if it would not be as well to commence with a history of myself, since from my early marriage, *circumstances*, (*not choice*,) *made me the actor*.

In literature, as in the arts and sciences, we see much to admire. It is allied to struggles, poverty and per-

secution; and therefore, its votaries suffer more keenly from *family alliances*. Woman is made a dependent being, and loses her attractions when employed in masculine avocations; and nothing brings a man so soon into contempt, as a dependence upon woman for support. I am convinced that a man ought never to attempt with literature alone, (especially in this country, where the literati are beggars,) as the mere provision of his daily bread. The pursuit of fame is a pursuit apart from the ordinary objects of life, and it is impossible to command the enjoyments of both; for this reason, the poet should be wedded to the objects of his affection, namely, the muses.

Our fancy for each other was unequivocal; how strange it is, that melancholy men are often captivated by the gay and vivacious girl—thus matches are made by the young and thoughtless, from momentary impressions, instead of profound and passionate sentiment, which we can only derive from a perfect knowledge of each other's minds and hearts. What a magic there is in that love which brings respect,—a sort of attachment that is abiding, honest, generous and intense!

Immediately after our marriage, my husband fixed his residence in Elizabethtown, a few miles from the home of my parents; he did so, with a desire of forming a Classical School for young men. His leisure hours, he determined to devote more eagerly to study, and the pursuit of fame. We had not lived out the *honey-moon*, when one of those occurrences so *common* to *genius* broke forth. The officers, for debt, levied on our household effects, and, though the sum was small, the money to liquidate the amount could not be ob-

tained; and in the short space of three weeks, our joint possessions were sold under the sheriff's hammer. Under this mortifying affliction, and before my husband could execute the plan he had formed of establishing a school, he was forced to relinquish his situation, (for village scandal and village gossip preponderated,) and return to New York. After passing a few days among his friends, he decided upon making his native State his home; and, in the month of November, scarcely two months after our marriage, we arrived in Boston. Here, he eagerly sought acquaintances among the editors of works who paid for contributions—though the sum was always inadequate to supply his daily wants. Alas! for the poor bard, he had not that readiness of resources—that faculty without which man has no independence from the world. He seemed always to suffer from a painful fastidiousness he felt when asking for his own. He possessed an unaccountable reluctance in all business matters; he would often make his mother the bearer of his despatches, and her verbal messages back would not always leave his mind unprejudiced. Upon examination, however, he found *he* was not the object of dislike, but his want of knowledge of discernment; he wanted address—that sort of suavity which would have enabled him to retain the aid of others while in a state of dependence—a certain manner which wins its way into the hearts of all.

How true it is that children catch not from their parents, only, but from those they most see, and loving most, most imitate in their tender years.

Weeks and months passed away, and brought with them many unwelcome events which would be in

compatible to relate; and which, if ever known, must be written by a more dispassionate biographer than I feel myself to be.

Well would it be for us, if indeed the mind could profit by "the wrecks of every passion;" for then could we measure our road to wisdom by the sorrows we had borne.

Time passed on. I endeavoured gradually and silently to reconcile myself to my lot; often weeping in solitude that our marriage was not blessed.

My poor husband seemed condemned to a mysterious destiny; he had few friends now, and having really strong affections, he felt keenly, but rather with resentment than grief. Instead of mourning over *causes*, he mourned over *facts*—he blamed fate, not himself. With the foibles of his mother he was well acquainted, and though he did not doubt her love, he suspected her want of judgment, and pride of character—yet continued through life subject to her control.

Deprived of his father's care from infancy, having little or no intercourse with children of his own age, and taught to act under his mother's diplomacy, with her favours constantly dinned into his ear, no wonder he grew up solitary, unsocial, and imperious.

For the short time he lived in Boston, he wrote and thought much. Some of his poetry contains the softest sentiment. He had but one fault; he pondered too much on his mortifications and ill-usage. Like Byron, he would feel morose to all who did not sympathize with his own morbid fancies; and leave his best friends to write a poem on solitude. It is thus the poor author sighs for renown, to purchase shadows at a high price. Spring was advancing, and the

poet found himself and family without happiness or home. The proposal was made, and back again from Boston to New York wandered the desolate steps of the child of poverty and sorrow.

It was on a cold and stormy afternoon, he set out on his journey from Boston to Roxbury, without bidding adieu to friends, for whom my heart still cherishes a fondness—on foot, without means, through one of those dreary New England snows, my husband led me. We stopped at a comfortless inn until the dawn of morning. From this place we took the stage to Providence; there he left me among strangers, to remain until he could send me the means to return to New York.

At length came the time that we were again united; hope once more cheered my heart. I never doubted my husband's determination and desire to do something that would place him in an independent position. He laboured industriously with his pen; but while engaged in writing an article which would bring the sum of ten dollars, perhaps his bills amounted to twenty. It was ever thus with him; the officers in quest of their booty, frightened and alarmed him; and before he could obtain the means to defray debts, with, as he thought, but one alternative, he would leave the place he was in, and plunge into a similar dilemma.

After the lapse of a few weeks, my husband consented to a request which I had frequently made, to permit me to return to my friends until he should fix himself in a condition for a comfortable and independent home.

For this purpose, he wrote frequently to Mr. Daniel

Bryan, then a resident and post-master at Alexandria, District of Columbia, who obtained a situation as teacher of a small school in Charlestown, Virginia; worth, perhaps, about four hundred dollars a year; not half a support, but which the poet accepted until something more lucrative should offer. In the month of July he set off upon this new adventure. On reaching Alexandria, he was solicited to remain at the house of his friend. Mr. Bryan had written some poetry, and I believe valued himself as an author. It was not long before the two friends quarrelled; and though they parted apparently amicable, the breach, as the sequel will show, was *final.*

On his arrival in Charlestown, he was introduced to a Mr. Galagher, the then editor of a small weekly village paper in that place. The mind of the author was ill at ease when he discovered that the place prepared for his reception was a log house several miles from the town, and distant a mile and a half from any dwelling. Although the world was hateful to him, this was a little too much solitude. He determined at the end of the quarter to remove to Harper's Ferry —not far distant from the place he was now in. He informed Mr. Galagher of his disgust for the place—gave up his school, and left.

CHAPTER VII.

Harper's Ferry is known as one of the most beautiful and romantic places on the American continent. The gorgeous mountains on either side of the beautiful Shenandoah—the rugged rocks on which you stand, from their immense height, to view the scenes below, around and above, all acted as a charm to his enthusiastic and imaginative mind.

He soon found himself the favourite of the people. He had a winning manner, if not to persons, to children; he was the more so, perhaps, from his own friendless and solitary boyhood. Encouraged to hope for success, he did not fail to use all his energies, and in a few weeks obtained the principal pupils in the place.

Just as he had formed his thoughts and hopes for success—his health, *always* impaired, because always preyed upon by a nervous and feverish spirit—became visibly affected; and at the termination of three months, a fever set in. The physicians were sent for; they decided that the climate was injurious—that a northern atmosphere was most conducive to his health. A faint flush passed over his faded cheek, as he turned away with a deep sigh, and a chill sinking of the frame, saying, "Am I never to have a home?"

While yet an invalid, and before he was even in a state of convalescence, he left Harper's Ferry, and arrived in Philadelphia late in the fall of 1828. Weary

worn, and sad, his first satisfaction became mingled with anxiety—he had for a long time been estranged from his literary friends, and the state of literature in that city. He determined, however, to prepare his poems, and publish a volume of which he might feel proud. He felt quite sure that fate could not present to him visions darker or more terrible than he had already felt. Alas! he had scarcely commenced the ordeal through which he was about to pass.

In this new publication, his most sanguine hopes were realized. All things for a time seemed to prosper. "The Cities of the Plain," the poem that gained him a reputation in England, with some of his best fugitive pieces, was about to be republished in this country. Just at this period, when his fortunes seemed to brighten up, he met accidentally with a volume of poems, the author of which was his professed friend, Mr. Bryan. The remembrance of the old feud was still fresh in his mind; he sought, perhaps, this opportunity for retaliation, and "reviewed his enemy's book." The review was a terrible sarcasm—the ridicule was more pointed on some stanzas that were composed on La Fayette's return to France from a visit to America.

As we are sometimes punished in this life for our indiscretions, so the poor poet suffered for this. Mr. Galagher, the person formerly mentioned, residing in Charlestown, Virginia, and editor of a paper, was an acquaintance and correspondent of Mr. Bryan. So soon as the review reached them, they conferred together, and adopted a plan which they thought would forever crush the destroyer of their *fame*. They printed large hand-bills, which they packed in boxes.

and sent throughout the country, with directions to their agents to be posted up in every public place.

It is unnecessary to observe that this sheet contained falsehoods of the deepest dye. How this affair affected the feelings of the poet, is better imagined than described.

So strange a compound is human nature, that falsehoods, when uttered in a bold and daring manner, have their influence among the best of men. This slander created a fearful revolution in the poor man's destiny—and poetry for once served as a material by which he obtained for himself and his family their daily bread.

It was at this crisis, friendless, broken in spirit, sunken in despair, that George D. Prentice, Esq., came out at once, and forever his friend; and in a paper he then edited in Hartford, avowed himself as such. This attachment was unbroken; they loved as brothers, until the day of the poet's death.

I desire as much as possible to avoid making mention of myself. I do not wish to be thought egotistical, or take to myself any merit at the expense of him who can no longer speak for himself. But as I sit alone, late at night, with the *impressions of the poet* before me, I turn my eyes inward, and awake to the impressions *engraved there.* I feel the bitterest drop of the fountain of sorrow, not for myself, only, but for him who sleeps to wake no more.

Men may talk of heroism, of battles fought and won. The scenes and sufferings of woman which we daily witness, would shake the courage and prostrate the energies of a thousand Napoleons. She cannot clothe herself in armour, or rush in battle; her panoply

is meekness, patience, forbearance, perseverance, love, the last of which will enable her to sustain poverty, oppression, imposition, hunger, thirst, and all the complicated evils to which, alone, and *without remedy*, poor woman is subject.

As the young mother turns to her infant, and forgets in its smiles her sorrows, so did I find elysium amid all my trials, in the love I felt for my first sweet child. Oh! how *perfect is that hope* with which the mother in her moments of despondency looks forth to the period when her child will sympathize in all the trials she has endured and known. This event, which gave new impulse to my feelings, created little or no change in the mind of my husband. In his extreme anguish he would admit of no palliative; he converted his sorrows into extreme wo. He could be severe on others, but if the same severity was exercised toward him, he felt it too keenly to bear. He could not laugh over his ill-fortunes. Ah! could he have done this—different, how different, would have been his fate, and the fate of his children!

The poem he had published was reviewed by the editors, many of whom were his enemies, who spoke favourably of his genius. Upon the reception of the work among his literary admirers, he received many letters of commendation; a few of which, it gives me pleasure to subjoin.

New York, March 12, 1828.

Dear Sir: On Monday last I had the pleasure of receiving your letter dated the first instant, but post-marked the eighth. The volume you mention as accompanying it, has not reached me. I have called at the post-office for it several times, but in

vain; and have delayed writing you, in the hope that it would be brought me by some private conveyance. Will you do me the favour to inform me if it is in town, and if so, to whom I shall apply for it?

I regret that you do not yet believe in the propriety of laughing at "*the stings and arrows of outrageous fortune, the oppressing wrong*," etc., etc. You forget that they are among the "ills that flesh is heir to"—a sort of inheritance, by the way, truly democratical in its laws of entailment, and not confined to elder brothers.

Yours, very truly,

FITZ-GREENE HALLECK.

S. L. FAIRFIELD, Esq.

NEW YORK, April 20, 1828.

DEAR SIR: Please forgive my negligence in not writing you ere this in answer to your former letter, and sending you my hearty thanks for the volume of poems. I have perused the most of them, and can truly say I have been highly delighted.

The "Cities of the Plain" is a sublime composition—it is your best. All that is beautiful in Homer lies in those descriptions that are grounded on probability; in the delineation of character, a clear perception of moral worth, of personal beauty, national rights, and national traits of government, history, arts, etc., etc., together with a beautiful description of the natural scenery of the earth, seas, and skies, as presented to the eye. And what is beautiful in the Iliad, is also beautiful in the "Cities of the Plain"—is the *life and soul* poetic in Burns, and the *pure spirit* of Byron.

The "Sisters of Saint Clara" is a most exquisite

piece ; you have been very happy in this. As a whole, it pleases me better than the "Cities of the Plain." With great delight, I have several times strolled among the tombs and mighty arches in "Westminster Abbey." You have really made me love to wander there. But oh! I would that the names of tyrants and wicked impostors were blotted out, and the mausoleum left sacred to *genius and virtue.*

"*To Clara,*" is a charming production. It possesses that chaste sentiment and pure flow of a noble soul, to which every heart imbued with generous and humane feelings cannot fail to respond.

Truly yours,

JOHN FRAZEE.

TRENTON, Nov. 22, 1828.

MY DEAR FRIEND: I hasten to acknowledge the receipt of a volume of choice poems from you, and return you my most hearty thanks for the distinguished favour you have conferred on me, in the dedication. If ever I have enjoyed pure intellectual happiness in the world, it has been in those moments when, retiring from the cold mockeries of heartless intercourse with business-doing men, I have surrounded myself with the images of those friends of my bosom whom fortune had taken away from me, and of whom only the remembrance was left. To recall their images, to enjoy in fancy their society, and to believe they sometimes thought of me, has charmed away the bitterness of many a lonely hour. And if ever I received an evidence, high and indisputable, that I had a friend indeed, it is the evidence, this last evidence, I have received from you. But still, when I open your book

and read that dedication, clothed as it is, "in thoughts that breathe, and words that burn," one painful emotion steals to my heart—how can I ever requite the favour—how much has my friend mistaken the worth of him on whom his obligations are conferred.

You know not the worth of the favour you have bestowed. Had you dedicated your book to wealth, all-powerful gold might have thrown wide open to its author the road to fame; or to some colossus of literature, and you would have gained a scarcely less powerful ally. But no—your gift was laid on the altar of friendship; your disinterested nobility of soul sought no other—and all that friendship can repay, is this humble tribute of an overflowing heart. I thank you, Fairfield, and God is my witness that I most earnestly wish your sun may shine brighter and brighter till your glory is full, and that your name may go down to posterity with that of Milton, and Cowper, and Byron; and if you rise in intellectual power from year to year, as you have risen heretofore, my wish will be gratified.

I have read "*Mina, etc.*," several times already. The *dedication* is admirable prose, and the dramatic sketch as admirable poetry. The story is simple and grand, and the style so chaste and unaffected that I think, as a whole, it is quite equal to the "Sisters of Saint Clara," though I have heretofore considered it as your master-piece—and it certainly contains some passages of surpassing beauty. I could wish that Mina had shared a better fate, but the regret that it awakens, only proves the power of the author over the mind of the reader. The "*Invocation*," is full of fine ideas. I never read anything that breathed more

sweetly the tones of melancholy music, than the lines beginning

> "But, Holy Spirit, I have been the child
> Of sorrow," etc.

The *Sonnet* that follows, recalls the "Childe" of Byron, and touches the same strings that powerful master of the passions loved to touch. The *Idealist* is also beautiful.

> "Oh! how I love that solitary trance,
> *That deep upheaving of the bosom's sea.*"

That last line is worth all the poetry I have ever written, and I would rather be its author, than the author of some whole volumes of poems I could name. *The Evening Star*, however, is, in Mrs. Potts' opinion, one of the very best in the book—and I will not quarrel with this authority; I like it very much. Of *The Revolutionist*, and the *Scripture pieces* which follow, I think the general remark, that they sustain the character of the work, is due. But I am strongly inclined to rank *The Son of Genius* first in the book. The regular measure pleases my taste better, and the steady flow of pure thoughts clothed in rich language, and intermingled with just sentiments, claims, I think, the first honor—it is all equally fine. If any piece disputes superiority with it, it is the *Visions of Romance*, and I confess that I am apt to give preference to one and the other, whichever I read last. The lines to *Luzelle* —*The Lay of the Colonist*—*The Hour of Death*, and *The Dirge*, are highly poetic, and do equal honor to the head and heart of the author. *The Necropolis* displays a deep train of thought; though I think you rhyme it with such facility that it often exceeds your blank verse in melody and power. *Consolation*, and

the *Miami Mounds*, are sweet poems; and *Rhigas* is one of the sweetest Greek pieces I have read; I like it better than Brooks's. The last Sonnet is unexceptionable. Indeed, this volume—and the public *shall* confirm what I say—this volume will carry you a long journey toward the temple of your destiny. See if my words prove not prophetic.

If anything will ever induce me to publish my tales it will be the commendation they receive from men of acknowledged genius, like yourself; (as for poetry, I must leave that field to you.) If ever I should do so, and advantages should result from it, I should look upon it as new debts of gratitude due to you for your kind introduction of them to the public, through the medium of a volume which bids fair to be as popular as "*Mina, etc.*;" and, poor as is the return I am now able to make for your goodness, no future opportunity to make a better will be neglected, should one occur.

Accept my assurances of admiration and friendship, and my best wishes for your health and prosperity.

Yours, affectionately,

STACY G. POTTS.

SUMNER LINCOLN FAIRFIELD, Esq, Baltimore, Md.

TRENTON, August 14, 1828.

MY DEAR SIR: I have not forgotten you—I never change my opinions of my friends for trivial causes. I did not answer your note of last month, because I did not know where to direct the answer. It was dated at sea, and, though post-marked New York, I supposed it had been sent in by a pilot-boat. I watched the papers to see a notice of your arrival, for they

used to tell me of your movements, and the only mention I saw of your name, was from some of your old enemies at Boston, merely saying you had returned.

I should then have written as I now do, promptly, had I discovered your resting-place, to say that it seems to me one of the strangest things in the world, that you should have thus early returned from England, where all the papers stated you were on the high road to distinction. What evil star, my friend, controls your destiny? Do you believe Milton or Byron could have lived by writing poems in America? England was your post; and, in the dark as to your reasons though I am, I think your return was unwise—and you will, I fear, think so too, unless you have brought with you a less unbending spirit than you took away.

Since you have been in Europe, the only notice I have seen of you, with the exception of a letter from London, which spoke highly of your prospects, was an angry one by Mr. Gamage. I expected him here, and he promised in a note to call upon me; if he had done so, I intended to scold him soundly for it. He is in New York, and I hope you will not have any further misunderstanding with him. These quarrels among poets are very wrong; you should all be good friends and brothers, and praise rather than cut and slash one another.

I read two or three of your letters from London, and intend making extracts when I get the series complete.

I am upon the eve of closing my literary career, if, indeed, the life of a newspaper editor may bear that

term; and I believe it is rather with pleasure than pain. The strife, and chicane, and turmoil of a legal life, commences with me early in the spring. I shall never write a line of poetry, I hope, after I get my parchment. This kind of resolution is the more necessary, as the country has more good lawyers than good poets—and a singleness of purpose, a devotion of soul and body, is necessary to encounter the frown of fortune, and turn the current in one's favour. So I give you timely notice that after the first of May, your once honoured friend will know no more about Apollo and the sisterhood than the marble statue of Burns, which you may have seen if you went to Edinburg. But, Fairfield, take care of the gentle creatures—I commend them entirely to your keeping; and I assure you I feel a fatherly or a brotherly care for their growth and welfare. You may still send me a song sometimes, over the mountains—and I'll give an hour of pensive sadness to the "days lang syne," at least.

But enough of this. We are journeying through a troublesome world, Fairfield, and I hope you and I won't disagree by the way. I know you will think less of me for my change of profession, but I must pay this forfeit to all my old literary friends. However, be it as it may, let us all enjoy as much as we can of friendship, cherish the kindest feelings for each other's errors, and elbow our way through the world as well as we can. Don't write me any more letters about "cutting acquaintance," etc., or let any notions of neglect creep into your head. I shall always feel much interest in your welfare, and esteem your ac-

quaintance and correspondence an honor—though the press of business now before me, will not fail to make me a poor correspondent.

May your name be immortal !

STACY G. POTTS.

S. L. FAIRFIELD, Esq.

CHAPTER VIII

Fortunately for the poet, his mind could react upon pleasing occasions. The letters he had received bespoke the admiring sympathy of the highest and the wisest. He loved admiration *only* when it sprung from the most profound sources—not the vulgar homage of pedants—the listless praises of literary idlers could not content the yearnings of his ambition. He was too proud in his temper, and too pure in his ambition, to feel his vanity elated by sharing the enthusiasm with the literary exclusives of his day. They even began to run down his works, because they did not fancy the author. He had the intelligent—the learned, among the people of *both* countries, to be his audience and judges.

As it is not my purpose to enter into elaborate descriptions of his character, I must pass on to a few of the principal events of his life.

A few months after the publication of his last work, he ascertained that there was a vacancy in the New town Academy, distant from Philadelphia about thirty miles. He busied himself at once in obtaining the necessary credentials for this situation. Although his friends were few, they were warm and enthusiastic in his behalf. Among them was the able and distinguished advocate, David Paul Brown, Esq. This gentleman, though he pitied his infirmities, and mourned

over his ill-fortunes, admired his learning and genius, and was ever ready to serve him. The introductions that were given, and the assurances of his high capacity to take charge of the academy, were sufficient for the trustees. He was chosen, and took immediate possession of this institution.

This was the most important station he had occupied. The building was spacious, and built for the accommodation of its preceptor and family. It stands upon a beautiful eminence, front of which is a lawn, and behind a large garden. The village, though small, contains persons of wealth and merit; the society of these, it was our good fortune for a brief period to enjoy. Two of the principal men that were connected with the academy were Dr. Jenks and Dr. Gordon; the latter, whose wealth was sufficiently ample to permit him to retire, lived in a charming and rural spot, distant a mile from our dwelling.

To this beautiful retreat my husband and myself delighted frequently to wander. The doctor and his family possessed that quiet manner and bearing which distinguishes the really well-bred from the coarse and vulgar. With the hospitality and kindness of this family, he seemed once more consoled; and, so far as human foresight is permitted to judge, he felt certain that he was in a fair way to obtain (if not opulence) an independent support.

With his leisure hours he cultivated his garden, and planted trees. His mind became calm—his feelings more tranquil and subdued as the spring returned, bringing its beauty and its bloom to chase away the sadness and sickness of the soul, that, through seasons past, it had been ours to bear

Woes once borne become strange pleasures to our memory! The past has its romance, its mellow lights and shades, soothing deep sadness like the brightest hope that bursts upon the future. He amused himself with the creations of his own fancy amid the privations and sufferings occasioned by the unmitigated malice of a host of enemies. He sung of hopes and fears, of loves and griefs, to find some counterpoise to the struggles of a world always an alien (because never understood) to his poetical mind.

While a resident at Newtown, he composed many pieces that are truly beautiful. What can be more exquisite poetry than his pieces "To Clara?" Clara was his early love; and if we are to judge of poetry by the effect produced on the feelings—if it be to glow, and tremble and weep, *surely this is poetry.* Of his works, which have been so often printed and so eagerly read, it is unnecessary to say much. All readers of taste and sensibility assign him a place among the first poets of his country. When engaged in composition, he wrote rapidly, and was truly happy; they were his *only* blissful hours—hours of high thought and silent intercourse

> "With the old seers and sages. When the soul
> Walked solemnly beside departed bards,
> And lion-hearted martyrs: and o'erveiled
> Forest, and hill, and vale, and rivulet,
> With the deep glorious majesty of mind."

In these he courted the muses, and in these he found poetry to be its own reward.

In the quiet of village life, away from scenes of turmoil, strife, and scandal, that he had endured during his short stay in Philadelphia, he began to feel new

aspirations. Sometimes his intellect would seem benumbed and laid asleep; and that kind of praise that he felt he merited, produced an extraordinary reaction, from which his whole soul seemed visibly aroused.

While thus influenced, he would revolve in his mind the subject and plot for some new and laborious work. There was no end to the creations of his fancy while these moments of inspiration lasted.

Well would it be for authors if they could hear praise without being elated—and ribaldry without being depressed. The first is often bestowed too precipitately, and the latter is so faithless to its purpose, that it is often the index to merit in the present age.

CHAPTER IX.

The poet loved antiquity, not merely, however, on account of its antiquity, but because it deserves to be loved. His subjects were well chosen, and always original. Some have affected a dislike to his writings, who could not contend with him openly. As a scholar, he was profound—and though he did not remain half his term in college, he continued a student *through life.* Memory was a predominant quality of his fine mind. He was scrupulously exact in his language in conversation as in writing; when engaged in the former, he commanded the admiration alike of the learned and the illiterate. Whatever were his faults, (and who among us are perfect?) posterity must equally honour and revere a man of his exalted talents.

I think it is Bulwer who says, "Depend upon it, that the Almighty, who sums up all the good and all the evil done by his creatures in a just balance, will not judge the august benefactors of the world with the same severity as those drones of society who have no great services to show in the internal ledger as a setter-off to the indulgences of their small vices."

He began to form his materials for a work he had for a long time contemplated. The subject was one that suited his genius; this poem is entitled "The Last Night of Pompeii." It was the *grand* and the *ideal* which appealed to his imagination. This pecu-

liar quality of his genius remained with him unimpaired from his youth to his death.

He had not written one canto of this poem when a most melancholy catastrophe occurred to change his fortunes and blight his prospects. He had taken two young men to finish their education, who boarded in our family—nephews of Dr. Gordon, whose parents resided in Philadelphia. The eldest brother, about nineteen, from his fine mind and amiable manner, won himself into the affections of his preceptor. They soon became companions in their rambles, and often repaired to a river, distant about a mile from the academy, to indulge in their fondness for bathing.

It was on a fatal afternoon in the month of July, they set out in unusual spirits to the river. They had not been in long when young Strawbridge, (for that was his name,) was seized with the cramp, and before assistance could be obtained, he sank and perished.

With much difficulty they succeeded to get my husband to shore. In the fright and effort he made to save his young pupil, he came near losing his own life—he was carried home senseless.

The next day he arose to struggle with the weight of sorrow and sadness within, and the gloom and desolation of all things without. The whole village was in a state of alarm at this unexpected event, and hundreds flew to recover the body of this lamented young man. They found it about twelve o'clock the same night, and conveyed it to the house of his uncle; from thence, accompanied by a train of broken-hearted relatives, they bore him to his last resting-place.

From this fatal occurrence, our home became solitary—the bell rang no more the hour for school; both parents and children seemed impressed with a superstitious fear. The school was broken up, and the academy deserted; "the song and the merry laugh" had ceased in our dwelling. Had my husband awaited passive under this new affliction for a little time, the gloom that pervaded his own mind, and the minds of the people, would have subsided. He could not bear the aspect that told of trial and death.

All importunity was vain—he insisted once more on trying his fortunes in New York.

It would be a sickening task to detail at length the trials and sufferings of the ill-starred poet and his family during the two successive years. He had been so familiar with grief as to become dull to every enjoyment but writing. Sad and bitter memories were consuming his manhood; even our fire-side enjoyments, that usually have an indescribable charm, were interrupted. He lamented the cause, but could *never remove it.* His mother, who felt as though his affections should be *exclusively* confined to her, sought ever to sow dissension, instead of the happiness and union of us both. A difference of tastes, tempers, and opinions, led us often into opposite paths.

What a triumph awaits me here, if I were disposed to be vindictive; how poor a thing is retaliation—it is but a momentary and wretched victory to those who suffer from wrong and persecution.

My husband, during his life, often appealed to me, if I survived him, to defend his reputation. The following little poem I have treasured, and will now add

as corresponding with the remarks I have just made. It was written in an hour of deep domestic suffering.

Oh! wilt thou weep my injured name,
And bear the stain that name must bear,
When I am lost to love and fame—
And blotted from the things that were?

Wilt thou espouse my memory, love,
When I no more can brand the base?
And true in thy devotion prove,
'Mid scorn'd despair and shunn'd disgrace?

Speak to my heart while thus it pants,
While thus it yearns o'er future hours,
Ere, dead to all its woes and wants,
It slumbers in oblivion's bowers!

Oh! for a name when I am dead,
To live till life doth cease on earth;
For deeply hath my bosom bled
Since the quick peril of my birth!

Turn not away with that wrought brow,
As I had craved a lawless boon,
But let thine eyes of beauty now
Beam like sweet stars at night's still noon!

And tell me that thy smile shall be
The sun of fame's undying flowers,
And Life's will henceforth be to me
Far happier, brighter, better hours.

The affection of our two guileless children—Angelo and Genevieve—seemed to bring back to him the days of his own youth, when with his little sister the hours sped gayly. Their docile and generous natures, their beautiful serenity of temper, cheerful, yet never fitful or unquiet, gladdened him with its insensible contagion. He was an affectionate and devoted father; he would often smile, and even laugh, when romping

with his children. To observe him at such times, was like basking in the sunshine of some happy sky. It was their innocence of experience, their moral incapability of guile, that charmed him, and drew him aside for a while from all that wearies life. "It is these holy ties, and not the mocking ceremonial, that alone render wedlock the seal that confirms affection; with these, domestic retirement will not soon languish into wearisome monotony."

Natures like his feel joy even yet more intensely than sorrow. During the year that had already passed, he had been busy in writing the poem he began at the time of the mournful event at Newtown. He wrote part of his time while bolstered up in bed; for, since his arrival in the city, he had been suffering under the painful effects of chills and fever. Instead of writing for fame, he began to feel the necessity of writing for money. It was a cold and cheerless winter, upon the completion of the poem, that I proposed a journey with him to Boston to try my skill, for the first time, in soliciting subscribers to print the work. I certainly thought it an undertaking, for I knew there was but one way to succeed in such enterprises; to visit gentlemen at their places of business, without respect to wealth or persons. We accordingly set out, and arrived in Boston in the winter of 1829.

The love I felt for my children, (*these real objects,*) gathered the scattered rays of the heart into a focus, and served as an impetus for *new* exertions; and, though I dreaded the publicity and roughness without, I knew life would go on smoother and happier at home.

My exertions and success in Boston secured to my

husband the means for the publication of his new poem. He returned delighted with the nobleness and generosity of the Bostonians. They are a good people, though a people of notions; *and, when they like,* there are none that can excel them in good actions.

On our return to New York, "The Last Night of Pompeii" was published. This production he thought his best—it cost him much labour and research. It was written two years in advance of "Bulwer's" novel of the same title, and copies sent him to London; and no doubt served this beautiful writer in some of his best descriptions. Be that as it may, he had given good evidence of talent before this, and no doubt could have done *nearly as well* without the poem.

"Many subjects," it is well said by Dr. Johnson, "fall under the consideration of an author, which, being *limited by nature,* can admit only of slight and accidental diversities. The book of Nature is open to all, and in her pages there are no new readings. All definitions of the same thing must be nearly the same; and descriptions which are definitions of a more lax and fanciful kind, must always have, in some degree, that resemblance to each other which they all have to their object."

To the world I must leave this work to find out all its sublime and beautiful things, and pass on to rapid changes, which brought their varying hues and melancholy termination.

Alas! I wish I could draw a picture of repose. Oh! that here I could lift the curtain upon a beautiful perspective, instead of the dark and dismal scenes, where the light is lost, and memory can no longer look on the

form of hope. How is the bloom faded from the face of existence—"how is the golden bowl broken at the cistern!" Ah! ye days of youth and romance, when there was no such thing as experience; your shadow only returns to me—your bloom is forever faded, and passed away.

The poet now determined to try his fortune in the establishment of a periodical magazine. At that period, literature of this description was rare; there were probably not more than three periodicals in existence, at that time, in this country.

For the success of this expensive work, he thought it best to visit Washington, to obtain at the beginning the signatures of men of distinction. For this purpose, he left home in the spring of 1830, accompanied by our little son. On the day after his arrival, our beloved idol was prostrated by a disease which in ten days terminated life. The news of the illness of my sweet boy came just in time for me to reach Washington a few hours before he died. Silently and solemnly we bore the form of our child to Philadelphia. There, through the moss-grown gate, in the lonely burial-ground of St. Stephen's church, sleeps Angelo, aged four years, three months, and ten days. It has been often remarked that as men were incapable of the same intense love for their offspring as women, so they were alike incapable of the same degree of suffering at their loss. This may be so, but not in *this* case. The loss of our son created a fearful change in the mind of my husband, and for a time it seemed as if life itself had almost deserted him. Years seemed at once to add themselves to his brow.

In his grief, he forgot he had other ties remaining that claimed his attention and energies.

His daily visits were to the grave of his lost son. The excess of grief from which he suffered, produced the opposite effect on my feelings. The very fact of his giving up all aims and pursuits, evinced in my mind the greater necessity to perform the duties I thought Providence had fitted me to discharge. Driven to the last extremity—without means to supply our daily wants, I *determined* to *persevere*, and establish the periodical for which my husband had issued his proposals. Consequently, I set about my daily visits—setting apart for this business five or six hours of each day. Astonished at my success, and feeling more encouraged, his mind became gradually restored to its former state of reflection.

In the space of three months, the accession of means from subscribers obtained, were sufficient to enable him to commence the publication of "The North American Magazine.

From the death of our son, it will be remembered that we fixed our residence in Philadelphia. There being no original periodical literature at that time in the city, the disposition of the people favoured a work of that sort. For *five consecutive years* he was the editor and proprietor of the work in Philadelphia. It was not to that city alone we were indebted for patronage to print a work so expensive. Our journeys extended *far* and near. There seemed to kindle a spirit of emulation among *all* to whom I applied for patronage; and the desire manifested by all persons to serve me in this arduous and painful undertaking, rendered it a pleasure and satisfaction.

It is easy to conceive the change that took place for a time in the fortunes of the poet. He now had the lash in his own hands. Although he had many friends among the editors, there were many who wantonly attacked him. Upon these he did not fail to exercise his epigramatical faculties. As he was progressively prosperous, his mind became strengthened —the gay faces of people with whom business led him to converse, created for a time a happy change ; and were it not that the child to whom genius is allotted cannot long endure the same scene, his course might from this period have been one of serenity and composure.

As I am describing some of the principal events, not the minute details of the life of my husband, I pass over five years—the *only* period in his career that was calm, practical, and quiet. At thirty-five years of age, he began to feel the littleness of all things, the vanity of ambition, and the folly of fame. He had been always looking for something too refined and exalted for human life, and every new proof of unworthiness in men, saddened or revolted a mind that expected perfection, where, from the combinations of human passions, he should have looked for frailty.

It is a fearful crisis when the heart palls and sickens at everything. When this is the case, inquiries are made by the common observer into the cause. The world cannot comprehend the drudgeries and toils, the wearying fatigues of literature, with all its small enmities, its meagre and capricious rewards.

It is not *time* that robs us of the zest for life ; it is experience and disappointment.

For five years, with our united efforts, he had been barely able to pay his expenses. The means requisite

to sustain the magazine amounted yearly to the sum of three thousand dollars. This amount, together with travelling expenses and the means of living, required on my part much labour and energy. The publicity to which, during a long period, I was necessarily exposed, was a source of trial to my husband, which, with his sensitive mind, he could no longer bear. He became wearied with the out-door labour, and disgusted with the miserable recompense which years of thought and toil had earned; for, after all, it is more the hope of ultimate competence than the love of glory that awakens the indolent mind, and strengthens the feeling heart, amidst midnight studies of every age. Did famished Otway look into futurity for fame, or around him for bread, when he was writing the "Venice Preserved," during his last three days of famine? What tortured the burdened soul of Chatterton?—The want of gold. What roused the burdened spirit of Goldsmith, in the darkness of his prison-house, to compose the inimitable "Vicar of Wakefield?"—The hope of release. Great minds have struggled on through all the evils of poverty, persecution and scorn—but that which they philosophically endured, they did not idly praise. They felt that whatever might be the inherent or attendant vices of opulence and luxury, poverty and privation were a terror and a judgment.

The acquisition of riches to men of genius, is generally supposed to operate in repressing its growth. Alas! the calm sunshine of even-tide has been seldom known to shed its genial influences upon the lives of celebrated men.

The poet, weighed down by care and labour, sold

his magazine in 1838, to James C. Brooks, Esq., of Baltimore. The work, I believe, ceased its existence in less than six months afterwards. From this fatal period commenced the decline of the poor poet; his spirits began to sink without any specific cause, and he seemed to hasten a career which, during his whole life, he *most feared and dreaded.* He began to be regardless of everything around, as his irregular habits grew upon him. It was not long before his constitution began to suffer from severe attacks of epilepsy. The exposure and suffering to which he became inured brought on a complication of diseases which lasted during life.

For the last five years of his life he was unable to make any exertion whatever for the support of his family, which consisted of five young children. Reduced to poverty and suffering, how did my heart yearn over these innocent ties! Our household effects, together with a fine library of historic and literary books, he had been for years gathering, were *all*, like our hopes, scattered to the winds, and the home that had been made cheerful by the combined efforts of us both, was now desolate and forsaken.

As a last resource, by the kind assistance of friends in my native country, and in the British provinces of America, I was enabled to undertake the publication of my husband's poetical works.

How often have I seen him in the midst of distress, in his hours of reflection, with his feeling heart sunk under the consciousness of suffering he had brought on himself and family! The last year of his life, his anxiety for his children hung heavy upon him. During that time, and the two preceding years, I was ab-

sent—part of the time in Europe, and the remaining time in the West Indies. During the last few days previous to his decease, he frequently expressed a wish to see both myself and his eldest daughter. His mind at times was wandering. When he alluded to his approaching dissolution, his heart was touched with pure and unmingled sorrow. He knew the event was likely to happen soon. He left Philadelphia in the fall of 1843, with his mother, and arrived in New Orleans the following spring of 1844. Soon after his arrival, he accidentally met with his old college friend, George D. Prentice, Esq., *the friend of all friends*, who had stood by him in seasons of adversity, when all others had forsaken him. Like the good Samaritan, he was ever ready to administer aid and consolation to his afflicted brother. This unexpected meeting gave a momentary satisfaction to his features, though the stamp of death was impressed on his countenance. He appeared already on the brink of eternity. He ate little, and seemed entirely to have lost the tone of his stomach. He often spoke of his children, and manifested great solicitude for their welfare. He had a perfect love for religion ; and, though he despised cant and hypocrisy, he revered the true and sincere worship of the heart. Though bred a Protestant, he doubted the genuineness of all creeds except the Catholic. *This* church he believed to be *the church of Christ, founded by him and his apostles.*

He had walked about until the day of his death ; he continued in prayer the greater part of the night previous. On the day following, he went into an adjacent room, and returned. In making the effort to get into bed, he fell on his face, with a slight tremor of

his wasted form, and in a moment the vital spark had fled. In New Orleans, on the sixth of March, 1844, in the forty-first year of his age, the sufferings of this ill-fated genius were terminated, and a life closed which had been embittered by want, suffering, and persecution.

His death excited a sad and mournful sensation in New Orleans, and throughout the country. His remains lie interred in the "Cypress-Grove Cemetery," about three miles distant from the city. There, far from the objects of his love, his home, and friends, his ashes repose among strangers, unnoticed and unknown—without a slab or stone to direct the lovers of his muse to the narrow house of the poor bard. Surely a tribute is due to his memory, whose talents for ages to come will do honour to the American name. Let it not be said that SUMNER LINCOLN FAIRFIELD, the Poet, has no grave!

The following pathetic and beautiful poem, by my husband, was addressed to me a few days before he died, and was *the last* breathings of his poetic spirit before it took its flight.

Dove of the Deluge! wearied are thy wings,
  Winnowing the void air on thy flight with me;
Yet every sunbow o'er thy beauty flings
  The heart's bloom, born of God's infinity.
Lone, faint, o'ercast by huddled worlds of gloom,
  Wronged by the heartless, wrecked in reach of bliss,
O'er life's Sahara, *on to unknown tomb*,
  Alone I wander—hopeless but for this—
This beauty of the blossom, breathing heaven
  O'er earth's dark, withering woes—o'er tempest Time—
Stumbling on Doubt's wild mountains! yet 'tis given
  Despair to know Love makes its own sweet clime,

O'er crashing wreck and smouldering ruin flies,
  Its cherub pinions flashing glory back,
The holy smile of Eden in its eyes,
  And angel hosts triumphing in its track.

Oh! but for this—for thee—divinest child
  Of sorrowing, sinning Earth! Time had not now
Hurled howling tempests o'er my spirit wild,
  And left its lightnings on my blasted brow.
Supremest Good bequeathed thee to impart,
  E'en to dim Earth, the blooming light of Love,
And, though the footsteps falter, still the heart
  Seeks thee, its ark, lone wandering deluge dove!

Through fleckered clouds the molten moonlight streams,
  As o'er my spirit floats thy smile of youth;
Visions of Arcady and Argolic dreams
  Wear, to my yearning gaze, the garb of Truth;
And all that Nature, through its myriad spheres,
  Could frame, in thy sweet bosom hath its home,
Yet o'er the Past swirls a dark sea of tears,
  And sighing Sorrow dims the days to come.

What but blest knowledge of thy sweetest spirit
  Hath Time vouchsafed through all its years of woe?
What its sad eras given me to inherit?
  Bereavement, want, and malady, that grow
By needing nutriment; 'mid vivid flame
  Doomed e'er to dwell, yet destined ne'er to die,
The martyr mind, through lingering years the same,
  Still from the *burning bush* glares on the blackened sky,
And finds no fellowship in any world;
  Or avalanche, or earthquake, maelstrom, ocean,
In the dread wrath of Ruin—each hath hurl'd
  Its maniac vengeance, 'mid the mad commotion
Of anarch Wo—Time's tyrant reigns alone!
  With giant strides, he treads the voiceless waste;
Without a smile, mounts empire's gory throne;
  Onward looks hopeless—darkly on the Past!

Bride of my bosom! though denied on earth,
Blend thy blest spirit with my saddened thought,
And breathe the blessing of love's holiest birth
Around life's pathways; what deep skill hath wrought,
Refine thou and exalt; be with me, Love!
In trial, toil, temptation—guide and guard
My erring steps—and oh! my prophet dove!
Hail to heaven's shore thine own lamenting bard!

THE

SISTERS OF SAINT CLARA

A TALE OF PORTUGAL.

BY SUMNER LINCOLN FAIRFIELD

THE

SISTERS OF SAINT CLARA.

A TALE OF PORTUGAL.

CANTO I.

I.

'Tis the bridal of nature, the season of spring,
When Pleasure flits round on her diamond wing,
And the spirit plays brightly and softly and free,
Like gem-dropping beams on a boundless blue sea,
And the young heart is lit by the beams of love's eye,
Like an altar of perfume by fires of the sky.
'Tis the heart-blooming season of innocent love,
When the green growing mead and the whispering grove,
And the musical stream, as it purls o'er the dale,
And the flowers whose lips zephyr woos in the vale,
Are seen with the spirit of thrilling delight
As visions of beauty too passingly bright,
And heard like the songs that come o'er us in dreams
When the soul's magic light through infinity gleams.
The gay Earth is vestured with verdure and flowers,
And hope sings away the sweet sunny hours,
While bathing in sunbeams, or over the sky
Her star-pinions waving through glories on high.

The citron groves throw on the wings of the breeze
Their balm-breathing flowers, and the green orange trees
Harp sweetly in airs from the hill and the sea,
Like lyres heard unseen singing joys yet to be.
O Eden of beauty! Lusitania! the sun
Loves to linger a while, when his journey is done,
On the lofty twin Pillars, whose brows in the sky
Gleam bright when the sun-god rides flashingly by,
Which stand in their might 'mid the waves of the sea—
Abyla and Calpe—unconquered and free.
And Cintra's dark forests look smilingly on
Apollo descending from his chariot throne,
While Estrella's lagoon, green Escura receives
Sheen tints of his rays from the wood's gilded leaves,
And Tajo's broad bay like a mirror reposes
'Tween a heaven of light and a garden of roses.

II.

The sun's last beam of purple light
Blazons proud Calpe's castle height,
And over Lusitania's sea
Looks with a smile of melody.
The volcan fires of Ætna glow,
Brighter as sinks Hyperion low,
And, 'mid the gathering twilight high
Stromboli flames against the sky,
O'er dark-blue ocean's billowy foam,
To light the wandering sailor home.
Child of the sun, the dusky Moor
Watches the horizon, bright obscure,
And, while the proud muezzin calls
Devotion's hour from Ceuta's walls,

Throws his keen eye's far-searching glance
O'er the dark billows as they dance
Along the Mauritanian shore,
And listens to their surging roar
Around Abyla's basement deep,
Lest in tired nature's twilight sleep
The foe upon his guard should steal,
And gain the pass ere trumpet peal.
Adverse, the gallant Briton's eye,
From Calpe's height gleams o'er the sky,
And marks with all a sailor's pride
The vast sail gleaming o'er the tide,
While every breeze that comes from far
Wafts music from red Trafalgar.
Evening's dim shadow o'er the close,
Fair Lusitania! and the rose
Of morning blushes o'er thy plains
With the same rich and gorgeous light
As when his warlike, wild Alains,
O'er forest, flood, and vale, and height,
From Volga's banks Respedial led
To Tajo's darkly wooded shore,
Though where they warr'd or why they bled
None know or name forevermore.
And the sun rolls his last faint beam
O'er princely dome, rose-margined stream,
And almond grove and jasmine bower,
With the same smile as when the earth
Blushed in the beauty of her birth.

III.

The full-orbed moon is gleaming bright
On Cintra's dark and rocky height,

And on verandah, turret, tower,
Palace and fane at this still hour
Glows with a radiant smile of love,
And gilds the music-breathing grove
With those pure beams of light serene,
Which sanctify the peaceful scene.
From wave and dome and field and grove
Rise the soft notes of pleading love,
And many a strain is heard from far
Of wandering lover's sweet guitar,
And in the songs he fondly sings
His glowing heart finds rainbow wings,
Which bear his spirit's powers afar
Unto his being's guiding star.
Dian—the queen of sighs and tears,
Her richest robe of beauty wears,
And smiles to hear the vows that rise
Beyond her empire in the skies,
While still she weeps, in prescient pain,
That passioned love is worse than vain.

IV.

St. Clara's dark and massy pile,
Where sunbeams fall but never smile,
'Mid the dense cypress grove uprears
Its ivied turrets, gray with years,
And, where the shadowy moonlight falls,
Uplifts its blackened prison walls,
Within whose solitary cells
Tearless despair forever dwells,
And sin, beneath devotion's name,
Reposes in its sacred shame,
While deeds 'twould sear the tongue to tell
Are done in murder's fatal cell.

Within St. Clara's cloistered gloom,
A living grave, a vital tomb,
Two lovely vestals, young and fair,
In misery dwelt and dark despair.
Their loves and hopes and feelings chained,
Lone sorrow o'er their being reigned,
'Till hope arose upon their eye,
And love's ecstatic witchery
Woke the fond hearts that had been crushed,
And the soul's sunlight current gushed.
Like roses budding on one stem
Or blending hues of opal gem,
Lonely they sat within their cell,
Silent till expectation's swell
Burst o'er each thought and feeling high,
Like sunshowers from the azure sky.
Round them the full heart's stilness hung,
'Till Zulma's glowing feelings sprung
To words that flowed like morning's beam,
Or song from lips of seraphim.
" Sweet Inez ! fast the fearful hour
" When we shall spurn monastic power,
" Doth hasten, and our spirits' might
" Must dare the ordeal of to-night.
" The church's power, or father's ire,
" And Heaven perchance, will all conspire
" To cloud young love's ascending sun ;
" Then, Inez, 'til the deed is done,
" And we have passed their power's extent,
" Let not thy dove-like heart relent
" Nor fancy picture punishment."
" Oh, lovely Zulma ! hope is light
" Within my trembling heart to-night,

" And fain this bosom yet would prove
" The silent joys of blissful love.
" But, ah! my path in life hath been
" So full of grief, and every scene
" Of joy so soon hath changed to woe,
" Life's common bliss I ne'er shall know
" Till my lone heart hath ceased to beat
" Within the snow-white winding-sheet."
On her pale cheek and blanching brow
Hope's feverish hectic ceased to glow
And o'er her bosom came the blight,
The darkness of perpetual night,
The gloom of days that long had vanished,
And thoughts, that never could be banished.

v.

Zulma's high spirit at the view
Of peril more undaunted grew,
And glowed 'mid sorrow's gathering gloom
Like angel faith above the tomb.
In danger's hour she stood alone,
'Mid fearful things the fearless one,
And, as her sunlight spirit burned
O'er the deep darkness of despair,
The trembling fears of all she turned
To hopes, and left them smiling there.
Her broad high brow the throne of thought,
And features into spirit wrought;
Her star-beam eye and face of light,
And moulded form that chained the sight,
And swan-like neck, and raven hair,
And swelling bosom, richly fair,
Which rose and sunk, like moonlight seas,
In its deep passion's ecstacies.

As if her mighty heart were swelling
In sun-waves for its heavenly dwelling ;
All spake a spirit proud and high,
A wandering seraph of the sky,
And such was ZULMA ; sorrow's night
Might its dark shadows o'er her cast,
But the deep gloom her spirit's light
Changed into rose-beams as it past ;
She had one aim, and none beside
Could bend her lofty lightning pride,
And, ere she drooped, she would have died.
Vemeira knew his daughter well,
And chained her spirit in a cell
Ere she could know the desolate
And hopeless woe of such a fate,
And 'twas to bless an elder child
He crushed that soul, so proud and wild.

VI.

Timid and fearful as the fawn,
That searches ere it treads the glade,
Yet lovely as a spring-time dawn
In robes of rosy light arrayed ;
Warm, feeling, soft and delicate
As the last blush of summer eve,
Yet trembling at the frown of Fate,
Lest, while her heart did sadly grieve,
Sin should assume the garb of woe,
And shroud in gloom devotion's glow ;
INEZ, though fair as forms that rove
Round Fancy's fondest dream of love,
Was tender, gentle, fragile, frail,
And shrinking as the violet pale
Which blooms in solitary vale,

By zephyr fanned and breathed alone,
Unseen, unsought, unprized, unknown.
Feelings suppressed and thoughts untold
Flowed silently, like molten gold,
O'er her fond heart, while virtue's sun
Threw glory o'er them as they run.
Her smiles and tears alike were born
In purity of virgin love,
And, like bright Eos, child of morn,
She drank at streams that gush above:
For sweetness such to her was given,
Her faintest prayer was heard in heaven.

VII.

When Zulma heard her sister's plaint,
And saw her gentle spirit sink,
Her soul arose in power—"To faint
"While standing on dark ruin's brink
"Were madness worse than mirth in death
"When love and bliss our flight await
"To quail, to droop despair beneath
"Were folly that deserved the fate."
"But if we fail"—"It cannot be!
"Love, like the mountain breeze, is free,
"And, amid peril, wrong and ill,
"Strong as the gale that sweeps the hill,
"Or severing ocean in its might,
"Brings long lost treasures into light."
"But will beholding heaven approve
"Our broken vows for earthly love?"
"St. Mary shrive thee! would'st thou be
"A vestal in hypocrisy?
"Oh, gentle Inez, guard thy love!
"Count Dion's daring quest would prove

" But folly's dream in evil hour,
" If thou dost spurn the boy-god's power."
Inez arose, her blue eye flowed
In gushing tears of pearly light—
" Zulma ! my heart were ill-bestowed
" If Dion called me false to-night."
" Vemeira's daughter still !—O Heaven !
" Love's messenger his call hath given !
" Inez ! that rose, by Dion thrown,
" Lay on thy heart—it is thine own—
" And haste thee, for we must be gone !"
The soft strain of a sweet guitar
Now mellowed came as if from far,
But, skillful in its measured fall,
It rose by dark St. Clara's wall,
And, mastered by Prince Julian's hand,
Its sweet notes flowed so richly bland,
They told unseen the minstrel lover,
And Zulma's soaring spirit over
Threw breathless rapture as she fled
From her lone cell with footstep light,
While Inez' heart, at every tread,
Spake like deep voices of the night.

VIII.

Queen of the skies ! why should the beams
Of thy soft eye so richly glow
O'er scenes that darkest gloom beseems,
As fitting their soul-harrowing woe ?
Why should thy smile alike illume
Despair and Hope, and Love and Hate,
The bridal mansion and the tomb,
Hearts full of bliss and desolate ?

Empress of Heaven! oh, thou wert made
For blooming hearts and tearless eyes,
To light the spirit's serenade,
And high-soul'd love's fond ecstacies;
And, when young Time in Eden's bowers
Wore radiant crowns of fragrant flowers,
While innocence with him would rove
In soothing shade of fair-leaved grove,
And love was bliss and truth its own
Blest guerdon in the morning's sight,
When angels looked from Glory's throne
And threw around her robes of light;
Ere woe was born of sin, and crime
Blotted from man's corrupted heart
The fairest name that youthful Time
Had written there with magic art;
Ere the sad hour man's father fell,
And o'er his fall rose shouts from hell,
Thou, sky-throned Isis! from above,
Saw'st nought but pure unconscious love
Beneath the azure sky—whose sun
Smiled on each deed by mortals done.
Alas! thou now art doomed to gaze
Upon a world so dark and fell,
That thy most pure and lovely rays
Reveal man's heart a living hell!

IX.

On the young vestals' desperate flight
Thou didst look down with smile as gay
As it had been their bridal night,
And they were led in fair array
O'er bright saloons and marbled halls;
And on St. Clara's prison walls

Thy gleaming radiance shone as fair
As if delight were smiling there ;
And on the lovely Inez' eye
As she and Zulma fled in fear,
Thy rays were thrown from yon blue sky,
Unconscious that they lit a tear.
Crossing the cypressed cemetry,
They hurried on with unheard tread
'Till they had gained the boundary
Of the lone empire of the Dead,
When, ere the signal could be given
To those who watched beyond the wall,
Inez stretched forth her hands to Heaven,
Weeping as if the hour when all
Her hopes should die had come and spread
Its pall o'er life—and thus she said ;—
" Now, ere we part, sweet Zulma, say
" Thou lov'st me as in childhood's day,
" When we together fondly strayed
" Through arboured groves and green-wood shade,
" Plucked roses on the mead to crown
" The hours we loved to call our own,
" And felt that heaven looked smiling down,
' When none beneath the laughing sky
" Were half so gay as thou and I.
" Tell me the bloom of life's young flowers
" Still lingers round thy changeless heart,
"And that the joy of happier hours
" Will never from thy soul depart !"
" *Now ere we part !* a strange prelude,
" Fair sister ! to the heart's high bliss ;
" Thy very spirit is imbued
" With doubts and fears—away with this !

"Thou art MY sister! droop not now,
"Remember thine and Dion's vow!
"They hear our rustling in the shade—
"Here is the cord-wove escalade—
"Now, INEZ, fearless follow me,
"Doubt not, we must and shall be free."
Unfaltering ZULMA scaled the height,
Cheering the lovely nun to speed,
And then flew down with footstep light
To JULIAN'S arms, most blest indeed,
The solitary vestal stood
A moment ere she dared to climb,
And in that moment's solitude
Her stolen flight appeared like crime;
She was so pure, so lovely, sin
Tinged not a thought her soul within.
But Dion hung upon the height,
And step by step she climbed above,
Her hand was stretched, in wild delight,
To grasp that of her only love,
When fancied guilt and dark despair
Came o'er her as she lingered there.
And her brain reeled in dizziness;
She heeded not the cries below,
She could not see nor hear nor know
The insupportable distress
Of those who saw her form on high,
Delirium in her swimming eye!
One last shrill shriek of wild affright.
The falling form that met his sight,
The hollow groan, that rose and fell
Upon his heart like ruin's knell,

X.

"Away—away! Prince Julian, fly!
"The alarum bell is pealing high,
"And ruthless hordes of vestal fiends
"Are rushing hither!"—Who ascends
Again that dreadful wall, so late
Scaled with a look that smiled at Fate?
'Tis Zulma—"Julian! leave me now,
"For I must share the death I wrought,
"And consummate my vestal vow
"In pain and darkness as I ought."
She rose to give her purpose deed,
When Dion barred her path and cried—
"Prince Julian! as thou would'st in need,
"And when despair hath humbled pride,
"Crave mercy of the Power on high,
"Seize Zulma quick, and fly, fly, fly!"
In passion wild and wildered fear
The Prince obeyed the wise behest,
And grasped the heroic maiden ere
Her deed had left him thrice unblest,
And, ere a moment more had flown,
The high-soul'd nun and Prince had gone.
Count Dion watched till they had fled,
Then sprung below among the dead,
Where headstones gleamed to mock the gloom,
The desolation of the tomb.
Gently he raised the unconscious nun,
And laid her bleeding on his breast,
Thus—even thus, a blessed one
To pillow such a form to rest;
While, as he gazed in speechless woe
On her soft, lovely features graven

With death's dark lines, he saw below
Nor love nor joy, nor hope in heaven.
But scarce the space of lightning's glare
Was left to muse of his despair,
Or soothe the suffering Inez there,
The cloister horde by Clotilde led,
Exulting that their holy hate
Could now be poured on beauty's head
And virtue's bosom desolate,
Rushed like hyena troops upon
The gallant Dion—but, appalled
By his proud port, though all alone
He stood—they paused and shrilly called
The faggot priest, their alguazil,
To guard the holy cloister's weal.
Folding his bosom's dying bride
With one strong arm unto his breast,
And with the other waving wide
Iberia's sword that many a crest
Had cloven in the deadly fray,
He bade the throng yield ample way,
And sprung upon the ladder's height;
Then came the alguazil, the light
Of hell was in his scowling eye,
Dashing the trembling host aside
Like war-ship rushing in its pride.
The lover there that moment stood,
Not like a warrior trained in blood,
But like that Spirit who on high
His four-edged sword flashed o'er the sky,
And bade the sinning mortal die.
"Yield thee, blasphemer! Heaven commands."
"Chain, then, the bold blasphemer's hands,

"And bind his madden'd spirit down
"Low as thy master's and thine own."
"Darest thou the monarch's alguazil?"
"Bid ye the whelp-robbed lion kneel!"
"Dark ruffian! thou wilt rue this hour."
"Ruffian!—not while my sword hath power."
And with the word the unfailing blade
Low at his feet the opposer laid,
And Dion seized the escalade.
He springs with more than mortal might,
He rises—almost gains the height—
His hand is on the moss-grown wall—
This moment saves or ruins all!
A word, a thought, a look, a dream
May ratify the doom of years;
One glance, one quick electric gleam
May lead unto an age of fears!
Oh! Dion, nerve thy heart again,
One minute—spring—and thou art free,
O think—thy love—'tis vain—'tis vain,
Despair hath sealed thy destiny!
They tear away the cord-wove frame,
And thou art doomed to woe and shame!
Still Dion bears the double weight
With one torn, bleeding, numbing hand
Awhile—he falls—the scroll of Fate
Hath rolled its darkest record! "Stand,
"Exulting demons, stand ye there,
"And o'er all earth your triumph yell,
"And laugh o'er death and life's despair,
"For than ye worse reign not in hell!"

* * * * * * *
* * * * * * *

XI.

'Tis joy to gaze, from the tall ship s lee,
On the curling waves of the moonlight sea,
When the mellow airs of spring-time night
Come over the heart as it floats in light,
And the sleeping flowers exhale perfume,
Like a virgin's breath from lips of bloom,
And the dark-blue waters curl and gleam
In the diamond star-light's mirrored beam,
While the spirit burns o'er the glittering sea
'Till it longs a moonlight wave to be.
Oh, spirits that sail on the moonlight sea
Should have thoughts as vast as eternity,
And feelings as pure as the sleeping rose,
When its leaves in the dew of the sunset close.

XII.

O'er Lusitania's soft-blue moonlight bay
Swells the gay song of reckless gondolier,
While his bark dances, as the waters play,
On the shore waves that glitter bright and clear.

Dim in the distance, marked upon the sky,
Wave the blue pennon and the glimmering sail,
And oft is heard the master's anxious cry
While shoreward sea-boy answers to his hail

Yet, save his song and their expectant cries,
The world is slumbering in a soft repose,
And spirits from their star-thrones in the skies
Breathe softly as a dew-lipped sleeping rose.

It is the hour when love's communion fills
Eye, lip and heart with rapture's magic light;
When waning Dian, throned on shadowy hills,
Smiles o'er young transports from her azure height.

Pomegranate, orange, lime and citron groves
Shadow gray turrets and time-honoured towers,
And heaven's pale queen amid their arbours roves,
And counts with tears the melancholy hours.

But hushed is song of happy gondolier,
And fast the shadowy sail ascends on high ;—
A step, a form, a voice—" Prince Julian's here !"
" Alfonso, haste ! this hour we 'scape or die !"

XIII.

Before the rising, shrill-voiced gale
Flies the yard-stretching, mighty sail,
Swelling o'er broad Atlantic billow,
Like swan upon her wavy pillow,
Dashing aside from her high prow
The wave, whose hissing foam-wreaths glow
Like jewels thrown in floating snow,
And hurrying on her watery way,
Between two oceans, heaven and earth's,
Like war-horse through the battle fray,
Whose mighty heart would burst his girths
In its high swelling, should his lord
Or check his speed or sheathe his sword.
With a long sigh, as if from dream
Of pain and anguish slowly waking,
From Julian's breast, with sudden scream
Wild as her bleeding heart were breaking,
Zulma rose and gazed around
On ocean's sons, on wave and sky,
And then fell back and deeply groaned,
While gleamed through tears her eagle eye.
" Inez ! sweet Inez !" Shudderings came
Over her like the sansar's breath,

As from her heart flowed that sweet name
Which now was linked with woe and death,
And, wrapt in silent suffering,
She saw nor wave nor sky nor lover,
Nor heard the light-winged breezes sing,
Like nymphs in sea-shells, ocean over;
All—all to her was pain and gloom,
Her thoughts of what she left behind,
And o'er her angel sister's tomb
She heard the lonely wailing wind,
With spirit voice of wild distress,
Denouncing Inez' murderess!
Darkly with phantoms of her brain
Communing, o'er the billowy main
Zulma was hurried rapidly,
And the low murmuring of the sea
Seemed, when she heard the gulfing surge,
Hymning the murdered vestal's dirge.

XIV.

The virgin huntress of the skies
With Ocean's daughters flies afar,
And Eos and her nymphs arise
Above the sun-god's throne, each star,
Orion's blazing sword of light,
And the twin-martyrs' glory bright,
And sea-born Beauty's radiance dimming,
While blue-zoned Tethys weaves a crown
Of pearls and corals brightly swimming
Through her vast empire fathoms down,
To deck Aurora's rosy brow
As her white steeds o'er ether fly,
And proud Hyperion, bright and slow,
Rolls unto heaven his glorious eye.

The bird of Jove his mighty wings
Waves o'er the crimson vault above,
And from his eye a radiance flings
Bright as the brightest glance of love
The white-plumed sea-gull skims the sea,
The curlew sports around the bark,
And nature sings of liberty
And love as when from ancient ark
The beasts of earth and birds of heaven
To their bright fields and skies were given.

XV.

The rushing ship is sailing now
O'er the bright wave of Trafalgar,
And morn is blushing o'er the brow
Of Algarve's dusky mountains far,
With the same smile of living bloom
As when to ocean's billowy tomb,
Amid the sea-fray's carnage red,
Their requiem shouts of victory,
Shrouded in glory, England's Dead
Sunk with unclosed, war-lightened eye,
Whose last, bright glance from gory wave
Saw England's banner proudly streaming
Victorious o'er their ocean grave,
And England's sword triumphal gleaming;
And o'er his sons, with every surge,
Bright, billowy ocean sings their dirge.
And now the swelling sail is fanned
By zephyrs o'er that narrow sea,
O'er which on either margin stand
Those giant mountain twins which he,
Alcmena's son, with god-like power,
Severed and poured the sea between.

And which, since that rock-sundering hour,
The deadliest foes have ever been.
Thence onward holds the bark her way
Through the blue wave in fair array,
While to the northern view arise
The Appenines 'neath bending skies,
O'er whose snow-mantled summits erst
The Mauritanian hero led
His warlike host, by fate accursed,
To glory, as the warrior said,
And the proud spoils of mighty Rome;
In that soul-stirring hour of pride,
When his heart rolled in glory's tide,
Having dread Cannæ in his view
No more than he whom Waterloo
Doom'd to the Rock-Isle's living tomb.
Had of that desolating fray
On Lodi's or Marengo's day.

Before the view, where sun-beams smile,
Rises that rocky mountain isle,
Where he was born, the mighty one,
Whose gory course of fame is run;
And where, perchance, a guiltless boy,
His fellows' chief, his mother's joy,
He wandered oft, and played, and smiled
Amid the mountain's shrubbery wild,
An innocent and happy child;
Undreaming of his pomp and power.
His crimes, disgrace and exile fate.
Ah! few can tell in childhood's hour
What thoughts and deeds their manhood wait
Or who will bann or bless the name
That blazes on the scroll of Fame.

In him a mighty spirit burned,
But with a fierce volcano glare;
Oh, had that soaring spirit turned
To heaven and drank in glory there,
Earth would have bowed in rapture's mood
And held his name in sanctitude.
The Man, who guides a nation's way
To bloodless glory, o'er his name
Throws fairer wreaths of light than they
Who deck Earth's highest shrine of Fame.
But ah! he fell, and with him died
His empire, power, and pomp, and pride;
And nought remains of all he won—
Quenched is Napoleon's zenith sun.

Still onward fleet the ship careers,
Like rapid lapse of hurrying years,
While fades the bright foam of its wake,
Like all the joys we give or take,
And bears, with sail expanding high,
Its course, beneath a glorious sky,
Toward soft Campania's fairy land,
Where zephyrs sport with breathings bland
O'er ruins erst of pride and fame,
And gorgeous domes of deathless shame.
And, 'mid the night that robes the skies,
Julian directs sad Zulma's view
Where Ætna's fiery columns rise
In desolation's lurid hue,
Glaring between this world and heaven,
Like fiends to whom destruction's given.
The baleful light is flaring o'er
Trinacria's vine-clad, flowery shore,

Where Arethusa once gush'd forth
In lucid streams for bards to drink.
And Alpheus 'neath the sea and earth
Met his fair fountain bride—the brink
Bloomed like a garden of sweet flowers,
And, near, Ortygia's sacred grove
Delayed the rosy-footed hours
Of pure delight and raptured Love.
A weedy marsh now stagnates there,
And taints the thick and sluggish air,
As all man's hopes close in despair.
The lovers' course is almost done,
The lovers' goal is nearly won,
And how hath Zulma borne the flight?
Like one whose brighest day was night.
Like one whose heart hath caught a taint
Of crime, though fancied, dark and deep;
Whose dread remorse doth ever paint
Horrors, and ne'er is lulled to sleep.
Since o'er a spirit proud and high
It reigns with three-fold energy.
Who backward looks and finds despair,
And forward, misery bars her there;
Who hath no hope on earth and none
Beneath high heaven's offended throne.
The more she thinks, the darker grows
The volume of her sins and woes;
No change comes o'er her agony;
Like Ætna's fire, it burns within,
And, dark'ning o'er the spirit's sky,
Burns ever with the gathering sin.
It was not madness; o'er her brain
Coherent thoughts ceased not to flow;

But 'twas that dread, oppressive pain,
That mountain weight of crushing woe,
Which follows, in a sinless mind,
A deed that spirits too refined
Brood into guilt—for priestcraft e'er
Riots in human woe and fear.
Reason was worse than vain, and speech
The dreadful mania could not reach,
That o'er her burning spirit shed
The baneful death-dew of despair,
The upas of a bosom dead
To all of beautiful and fair;
For Zulma sought no sympathy,
No comfort faithless as 'tis free,
But leaned upon the penal rod
And bowed her burning heart to God.

XVI.

The barque has passed the Tyrrhine sea
And anchored in the glorious bay
Of proud and base Parthenope,*
Where perfumed gales with sunlight play
O'er antique temple, giant tower,
And palace proud, whose mirrored dome,
Like a bright heaven, o'er many a tomb
Of many a mighty one laid low
Gleams with a rich, refulgent glow,
Like Freedom o'er lost Power.
The barque is moored—the lovers gone
Beyond the once fair Lucrine lake,
Where dark-browed Ruin reigns alone
O'er Baiæ lost in marshy brake,

* Neapolis, or Naples.

And all the fairy gardens, groves,
Meadows and dales erst loved so well
By him* (so reckless luxury proves
In one a nation's ruin fell)
Who shunning Glory's shrine when he
Had gained the fane, left mighty Rome
The victim of fierce anarchy,
Dreading yet hurrying on her doom.
Lucrine—the haunt of mirth is gone,
And there volcanoes glare alone!
Baiæ hath sunk to dust, and she,
Earth's mistress stands, like ancestry,
Scowling o'er sons whose highest boast
Had been their fathers' deepest shame,
To pride, to truth, to glory lost,
To honest hearts and patriot fame.

XVII.

Days, weeks and months have been and gone,
And lovely Zulma dwells alone
In solitary castle high
Between fair earth and fairer sky.
Julian had been, all lovers are,
Had knelt and sworn his deathless love,
And, like a sky-throned, radiant star,
Thrown light and beauty from above;
He had been all that being is,
Whom kindoms wait—I dare not dwell
On man's *intent* to offer bliss
To one who had for him farewell
Bidden all thoughts of earth and heaven,
And sole to him her full heart given.

* Lucullus

Prince Julian was Campania's heir,
And thus decreed his royal sire ;—
"Thou wed'st proud Austria's daughter fair,
"Or never com'st the sceptre nigher."
Julian was proud of pomp and fame—
The fair nun could nor trump his name
Nor plume his power—but she might be
The unseen queen of sovereignty,
The empress of his private hours—
The angel of his palace bowers.
So Julian thought, though he had tried
Her honest fame by speech oblique
And look lascivious, when his pride
And birth and state appeared most weak
Before wronged Zulma's Juno eye,
Whose glance spake pride and purity
From day to day he talked of love,
While Zulma would not see his aim,
Save when the princely sophist strove
To prove all rites a needless name ;
Then flashed her eye and glowed her brow,
Like sunbeams o'er the mountain snow.
On love I will not moralize ;
It hath more wiles and snares than sighs ;
Sooth be the tale and fair I tell—
His deeds are man's true chronicle.

XVIII.

'Twas soft Campania's evening hour,
And earth and heaven were seas of light,
And Zulma in her rose-wove bower
Sate gazing on the horizon bright,
Where white clouds float and turn to gold
In many a bright and glorious fold,

And fancy pictures angel pinions
Far waving o'er those high dominions,
'Till, as she thought of pleasures gone,
And Inez, tortured, dying, dead,
And her own misery there alone,
Her hopes destroyed, her true loves fled,
Her bleeding heart left desolate,
And all the ills and woes of fate,
She seized her harp and mournfully
Sung of those joys no more to be.

THE BANKS OF ZEVERE.

The bright sun is sinking o'er Italy's sea,
And kissing Campania's fair gardens of flowers,
But, oh, his smile brings no pleasure to me,
For my heart ever grieveth o'er childhood's sweet hours:
Sweetly gay rise the notes of the lover's guitar,
As he greets his heart's bride in the valley cot near,
But, ah, all my songs of delight are afar,
Like a spirit's voice heard on the banks of Zevere.

How oft have I sat with sweet Inez upon
Those rose-cushioned banks in our being's gay hours,
And fancied delights ever new to be won
In the great World of beauty and music and flowers
How oft, O thou dear one! I slumbered with thee
In our moon-lighted bower in the spring of the year
And heard the birds singing on our apricot-tree
When we woke to delight on the banks of Zevere!

How often when nature in vain bloomed around
I turned in my heart-stricken sorrow to thee,
And in vigil and penance and weariness found
Thy sweet love a solace and treasure to me!

But, alas! thou art dead, and I am alone,
Far from all that on earth or in heaven were dear;
Fare thee well, lovely Inez! dark shadows are thrown
O'er our bower on the banks of the lonely Zevere.

Julian had stood beside the bower,
And heard, unseen, the mournful song,
While every blushing, dewy flower
Reproached him with fair Zulma's wrong;
But nature's voice, so soft, so still,
Fails to o'errule ambition's pride,
Or with atoning sorrow fill
A lordly heart unsanctified.
Julian drew near and greeted fair
The sad, forsaken, lovely maid,
And, eloquent in praise and prayer,
Rehearsing all he oft had said,
Implored compliance with his love,
Acceptance of his treasures—all—
And she should ever—ever prove
The queen of banquet, bower and hall,
And be his heart's eternal bride,
His life his sun, his hope, his heaven,
And, when he gained his throne of pride,
His royal name should soon be given.
But, while the Prince besought and prayed,
How sat and looked the insulted maid?
Like her of Enna's rosy vale
When wooed by him of Acheron;
Her marble brow, her cheek so pale,
Her tearful eye—all brightly shone
With pride and shame, disdain and scorn,
And thus—"Why was I ever born

"So to be scoffed at?" quick began
The nun, while fierce her hot blood ran,
And her small form, dilating, grew
Like towering angel on the view.
"Prince Julian, cease! I charge thee, cease!
"Are these thy notes of love and peace?
"Art *thou* to be a nation's king?
"Thou—false, deluding, faithless thing!
"The thoughts that lightened spirits high
"In the old days of chivalry,
"Throw not a wandering gleam o'er thee,
"Thou craven night of loselry!
"Vemeira is a noble name,
"And it can never be that fame
"Should Zulma's memory link with shame.
"Shall I thy leman be? O no!
"Never while I can wield a blow,
"While poison drops or waters flow.
"Rede thou a woman's spirit well
"Ere mock her thus with words from hell,
"And know that virtue is her heaven,
"To things like thee, oh, never given!

* * * * * *
* * * * * *

"O Julian, Julian! love like mine
"Is quenchless, deathless, for 'tis pure;
"E'en now it doth around thee twine
"Fondly, and cannot but endure
"The same as when thine eye first shone
"O'er the same mirror as my own.
"Hadst thou been what I thought thee erst
"As knightly as thou wert at first,
"Though doomed to groan in poverty,
"'Mid malice, misery, wrong and ill,

" The slave of fear—a lord to me—
" I would have loved—obeyed thee still,
" And, with unsorrowing brow and eye,
" Forsaken not and unforsaking,
' When sleeping, kissed thy misery
" Away, and sung to thee when waking.
" But these are dreams of passion yet
" Surviving when its hope hath set;
" Vain mockeries of my bosom's sun,
" Quenched ere his journey hath begun!
" I leave thee, Julian! and be thou
" Thy own just judge—no worse! and now—
" There are thy gifts!"—From neck of snow
Her carcanet—and then her zone
Of jewels and her chains and rings
She loosed and threw, disdainful, down;
" There, Julian, take the gilded things,
" For which thou thought'st that I would sell
" My honour—and now fare thee well!"

XIX.

Bewildered, lost in guilt and shame,
And torrent passions wildly warring;
Defied, despised in deed and name,
Each wild-fire thought another marring;
Prince Julian stood unmoving where,
In all the grandeur of despair,
Zulma, like empress throned in power
More than deserted nun, had left
Her lover in that sundering hour
When her proud heart of hope was reft.
Zulma had hurried from his view—
Her form of love, her voice, her smile,

No more enchantment o'er him threw—
No more his sorrows could beguile;
She had been his—and now was not—
He had been hers in grief and woe—
Now she had gone—to be forgot—
And he was left alone to—"No!
"By Heaven! it cannot, shall not be:
"Crown, sceptre, kingdom—what are ye
"To love and love's true paradise?
"The earth preferred unto the skies!
"Ambrose!" "My lord!"—"Caparison
"The fleetest steed in all my stalls,
"And bring the courser here anon—
"And guard thou well the castle walls
"I will the maid regain or die,
"For Honour is man's majesty!"
He vaulted on his gallant steed,
And vanished in the forest dun,
Then rose the hill, and o'er the mead
Rushed 'neath the last beam of the sun.

THE

SISTERS OF SAINT CLARA.

CANTO II.

I.

O LAND of my birth! thou fair world of the West!
With freedom and glory and happiness blest!
Thou nation upspringing from forest and grove,
Like wisdom's armed queen from the brain of high Jove!
Though thy winds are the coldest the North ever blows,
And thy mountains the drearest when covered with snows;
Tho' the warm fount of feeling is chilled while it gushes,
And pleasure's stream frozen as brightly it rushes;
Tho' thy sons, like their clime, are oft chilling and rude
And rough as the oak in their own mountain wood;
Yet I love thee, my country! as fondly as Tell
Loved the Alpine Republic he rescued so well.
For thy yeomen can circle the winter-eve hearth,
Undreading oppression, and talk of the Earth,
Whose bosom yields nurture to father and son
Leaving hearts pure and gay when the glad work is done:
While the pæans they shout over glories by-gone
Are echoed by virtues for ever their own.

O thou home of the rover o'er ocean's rude wave,
Asylum of sorrow and fort of the brave!
Advance in thy glory o'er forest and sea,
Unrivalled, unconquered, heroic and free!
Though the rose bloom and fade in its holiday hour,
And the sun-god is palled in his glory of power
Tho' winter's cold breath blanch the blossoming rose
Unlike the bright clime where the sky ever glows,
Yet thy virtues bend not to each soothing breeze,
Whose syren song lures through the soft shading trees
Like the gay, grovelling sons of the tropical clime,
Whose skies are all glory—whose earth is all crime.
None love thee so well as thy sons far away,
None bless thee more oft than the bard of this lay

II.

The sunniest rose that ever blowed
In velvet vale of soft Cashmere;
The loveliest light that ever glowed
O'er heaven in spring-time of the year,
Ne'er blushed and beamed more purely bright
Than gentle Inez' sinless heart
Upon that dread unholy night
When doomed with all it loved to part.
No spirit, gazing from above,
With eyes impearled in pity's tears,
Cherished more heavenly thoughts of love
In glory's highest, brightest spheres.
Than that pure child of love and light,
Dragged, 'neath the covert of the night,
To the dim arch'd refectory;
Where, telling fast their rosaries,
And lifting many a saint-like eye
To heaven with muttered groans and sighs,

The demon conclave met to doom
To living grave, to breathing tomb,
The apostate, suffering, dying nun.
The word hath passed—the deed is done!
Ere morn gleams through the pictured glass
Of prison cell, or o'er the wall
Of dark St. Clara light doth pass,
Dimly and thick and sickening, all
Of that dark bigot band, save one,
Are kneeling at the tapered shrine,
Before the Omniscient's holy throne,
Where every thought should be divine,
To chant their impious prayers to Him,
In whose creation-searching eye
Not even the heavenliest seraphim
Are pure in their great piety!
Alas! that Heaven's most blessed boon,
Religion, breathing peace and love,
In man's polluted heart so soon
The veriest creed of hell should prove!

III.

Unseen, unfelt, unknown, her fate
O'er the fair vestal's head had past,
And she was left all desolate—
The doom was sealed—the die was cast—
Ere, waking from her dreadful dream,
She faintly said—"I heard a scream
"Of death, methought, O Dion! say
"Is Zulma safe?" Then, as she lay
Leaning against the dungeon wall,
She turned—groaned—and fell back again;
"Oh, Dion! love! oh, tell me all,

"Where—where is Zulma?"—Awful pain
Came o'er her then and dimmed the eye
Of yesternight's dread memory,
And through her spirit's drear opaque
She could not look—she could not take
Perception of her agony;
She knew 'twas so—but how or why
It baffled her delirious brain
To tell;—and then she thought again,
And more distinct her memory grew
Of what had passed—and chill the dew
Of death hung on her writhen brow,
Where love still shed its parting glow,
As dim she caught the past and gone;
Yet she could not—the dying one,
Think why she thus was left alone.
She spake again, but faint and low—
"O Dion! thou hast often said
"Thy love could master every woe,
"And o'er all griefs its radiance shed;
"It cannot be that thou should'st now
"Forsake thy love, forget thy vow—
"Now, when I feel—O Dion, come
"And bear me hence—I must go home!"
She listened then for some faint sound,
And strove to rise and look around;
But all was midnight gloom, and she
Alone there in her agony.
Still memory gathered link by link—
And still life's current quickly bled—
With a death-thirst she longed to drink
What flowed around her dungeon bed·
She scooped the fluid in her hand,

And bore it to her lips—'t was blood!
And then her spirit lost command
'Mid horror, gloom, and solitude,
While thought, no words of man can tell,
O'er all the past began to swell,
And well she saw her hopeless doom,
There buried in eternal gloom,
Whence shrillest shriek and wildest cry
Could never reach the shuddering sky.
No missal there nor cross had she,
O'er which to breathe her parting breath;
To cheer her in her misery,
And change to bliss the pangs of death;
For they had banned the dying nun
And barred redeeming penitence!
Demons! their hate her glory won—
Her amulet was innocence!
So malice works its own reward,
And weakest proves when most on guard,
For never yet hath hatred wrought
The deadly ruin which it sought,
Untended by a deadlier blow
Than that which laid its victim low.

IV.

A sound disturbed her solitude—
High chanting from the chapelry;
Like wailings from a gloomy wood
When echoed by a stormy sky,
The distant swell of cloister strain
And matin hymn came o'er her brain,
And roused to life her slumbering pain;
It was her dirge—that morning song,
And slowly rolled the notes along

The cypress groves—the vaults—the cells—
Like murder's midnight groan which tells
The fearful deed most fearfully ;
And there the lovely Inez lay
In suffering's last extremity,
While not a solitary ray
Of light relieved the heart-felt gloom
That palled her spirit in the tomb.
It was a mockery of her woe—
The mass of hell yelled out below—
That pæan, like a death-doom sent
Through farthest vault—through deepest cell,
To agonize the punishment
Of the fair one Heaven loved so well.
But oh, no fiend with things can cope
Whom God hath left to their own will—
Giv'n o'er beyond all reach of hope,
At hate's hell-cup to drink their fill ;
The deadliest demon, banned the most,
May fill the archangel's holiest throne
Ere mortal once—forever lost,
Can for his damning deeds atone.
The light of heaven may beam o'er hell
Dimly and touch the apostate there ;
But man, abandoned, bids farewell
To hope, and weds his own despair.

v.

Another sound the stillness broke,
And Inez' bleeding heart awoke.
It was the wailing of a dove,
The death-song of a simple bird
O'er her who died for heaven and love,
And gladly were the soft notes heard.

Perched on a cypress o'er her cell,
The bird hailed not the glorious sun,
But sadly sung the last farewell
Of the pure, sweet, expiring nun,
To earth and earthly sins and woes
And life so early in its close.
As Inez listened to the strain,
And longed to waft it back again,
The shade of death was in her eye,
The pulses of her being beat
Faintly, and death's last agony
Came o'er her like a shadowy bloom,
A soft voice stealing from the tomb,
A light to guide the parting spirit
Beyond the woes that all inherit.
Feebly she sunk—the crimson tide
Gushed forth no more—her heart was still;
Yet her lips trembled as she died—
"Dion—forgive—my wrongs!" and 'till
Her features sunk collapsed in death
That name was breathed with every breath.

VI.

A taper gleams amid the gloom—
A white-robed form approaches near—
It pauses by the dungeon tomb,
And listens tensely as in fear,
Or hope—and now it moves again
And lifts the iron-bolted grate,
And gazes o'er the cell of pain,
Doubting its lovely tenant's fate.
Demon! go in—thy victim's gone!
Unseen, unheard, like guilt alone,

Clotilde doth listen there awhile,
And then descends—and with a smile
Deadly and dark moves round the corse,
Whose features are an angel's still.
"Dead?—Ay, 'tis well—it had been worse
"Had justice half fulfilled my will
"Or hadst thou lived till now!"—She turned
The lovely vestal's body o'er,
And laughed aloud; and then she spurned
The corse upon its gory floor,
And smiled as if she gave it pain;
And then she raised the beauteous nun—
"Ay, 'tis a blessed fate, sweet one!
"That thou hast wrought thyself—again
"Thou would'st not do the deed!" She threw
The pale, cold corse in scorn away,
And yet more dark her features grew,
As death had robbed her of her prey;
And still she stood, with fiend-like eye,
Revelling in hatred's demon feast,
And with low curse and muttered cry
Banning e'en HIM who had released
The vestal from her deadly power
And raised the soul to Eden's bower,
When a loud crash rose high—and far
The echo as of bolt and bar
Shooting, went forth!—Where art thou now,
Proud abbess? Ah! thou soon wilt know!
The iron portal to the cell,
The lifted grate had fallen—how
It nought avails for me to tell;
Perchance, the wind had laid it low,
Or death-winged angel might have thrown
The dreadful bars in anger down,

Eternal justice to dispense
To suffering, murdered innocence.
Howe'er it was—proud Clotilde there
Was doomed to perish with the dead,
In silence, darkness and despair,
And meet the fate her sentence said.
There could be no relief—no, none—
She had gone forth, unseen, alone,
And from that subterranean cell
No cry arose to human ear;
It was a dark monastic hell,
Beyond hope's sun-illumined sphere.
She shook the bars—but they were fast—
She shrieked—but echo mocked her pain;
She gazed around—but shadows past
Like fiends, and she sunk down again.
And then remorse was leagued with fear,
And both like vipers gnawed her heart;
And horrid sounds were in her ear
That cried—"What dost thou here? depart
"Seek thou the hell of thy dark creed,
"Thine be the doom thou hast assigned,
"The unpitying bigot's bitter meed,
"The quenchless ruins of the mind!
"Depart! depart!" how awful e'er
Is guilt when phrenzied by its fear!

VII.

Unshrived, she there must die in all
Her unforgiven guilt and woe;
On either side a dungeon wall,
And wrath above and death below,
Unsoothed, unpitied and alone,
Without a single orison,

Without a tear to mourn her fate,
Or look of grief compassionate,
Or holy right or orris pall
Or requiem chanted forth by all
The holy vestal sisterhood,
Who round her erst admiring stood
As if St. Marie had been given
To them in other form from heaven.
But such be guilt's dark fate for e'er!
She there must perish dust to dust,
Unshriven in the dungeon drear,
Accursed below—among the just
All entrance barred eternally!
Now guilt forestalled redemption's hours,
And madness sprung from agony!
Darkly the storm of misery lowers,
And darker yet it soon shall be;
For Sin uprears her giant form
And mad Remorse, her spectre, stands,
Gashed by the fangs of guilt's dark worm,
Lifting on high his gory hands
To warn too late—to tell at last
The victim that her day hath past,
And yet more awful thoughts arise
More fearful shadows blast her view,
And wilder are her echoed cries,
And colder is the dungeon-dew.

VIII.

Time flies—strength fails—but madness grows
Stronger and darker in its mood,
And fevered Fear delirious throws,
O'er all the gloom a robe of blood:

And now she sinks beside the nun,
There like a song-lulled angel sleeping,
And smiling as her woes were done,
And she in heaven were vigils keeping.
She starts as if an adder stung!
A demon voice of mirth had rung
Through all the chambers of her brain;
She listens—now it comes again,
Blended with laughter wild and rude,
And echoes through the fatal cell,
And cries aloud—"Thy soul's imbued
"With blood of innocence;—'tis well
"That on thy victim's lifeless breast
"Thou should'st sink in eternal rest!"
Her maniac heart could bear no more,
The last extremity had come;
She grovelled on the cold earth floor
In speechless anguish at her doom;
Gazed with a madden'd eye, that told
What horrors o'er her bosom rolled,
Upon the nun who slept as still
As infant that has drank its fill;
Then with a shriek that might appal
The fiend, against the dungeon wall
Dashed headlong—groaned and died!—'Tis past,
The more than mortal suffering.
Alas! I would it were the last!
But earthly minstrel dare not sing
Of fates beyond the farthest ken
Of starry-eyed philosophy;
Among the abodes of mortal men
He finds enough of misery

To break the heart and rack the brain
That feels or thinks of human pain.
Her fate hath past—her soul hath fled—
And peace attend the voiceless Dead!

IX.

Life scarce had parted and her fate
Passed o'er the haughty abbess there,
Ere steps approached the iron grate,
And voices, as in last despair,
Echoed above the fatal cell.—
The portal's raised and they descend,
The sisterhood.—Now note ye well,
Fair vestals! ere ye ween to wend
In sin's broad path, sin's woful end!
The highest bliss of heaven may prove
The bitterest dreg in misery's cup,
And spirits born of heaven and love
By guilt be lost and given up
To state abhorring and abhorred—
And not adoring and adored!
Long was the anxious search and quest
Ere they could trace their abbess there,
And anguish searched full many a breast
As they stood gazing in despair
On murdered and on murderess.
I pause not now to paint the scene—
The natural ills of life suffice
To fill with tears the sternest eyes,
When thought retraces what hath been,
To gloom the heart and cloud the way
That shone so brightly yesterday

Together from the dungeon cell
The corses were in silence borne,
While lingering tolled the funeral knell,
And sullen echoes moaned forlorn;
And shrouded in their vestments white,
They laid them side by side, and kept
Their vigils through the livelong night,
While breathlessly the dead ones slept,
As softly as two infants, born
Perchance, to be each other's scorn!
The wakeful sisters watched alone,
And many a holy rite was done
To foil the fiend and save the soul
Of her who once held high control
O'er penance stern and vow austere,
For many a long and sinful year.
The lovely innocent that there
Too holy was for grief or prayer,
Lay like a picture of the blest,—
'Twas her last hour and loveliest!
They watched—they prayed—night waned and morn,
Like holy hope in Eden born,
Blushed the stained glass and casement through,
And gave the gloomy scene to view.

x.

To die—to feel the spirit fainting
In the mansions of the breast,
While yet the vivid eye is painting
Life and vigor unpossessed;
To see the mortal frame decaying,
The temple's pillars breaking down,
And know the soul will soon be straying

Over climes and realms unknown ;
While warm affection hovers o'er
The couch of death, with wailing prayer
Imploring lengthened life once more
In all the anguish of despair ;
And we behold and feel and know
All that is felt for us and yet
Beside perceive the overthrow
Of hopes on which the heart is set,
And picture in our dying hour
Anguish unknown till we are dead,
And conscious, hopeless misery's power,
And tears from being's fountains shed—
Oh, 'tis a time, an hour of gloom
Worse than the midnight of the tomb !
But, ah, 'tis worse to think that we,
The proud, high, sentient lords of earth
Must moulder into dust and be
Or clay or nothing ! At our birth
It was decreed that we should die,
But not that we should rotting lie
With every foul and loathsome thing
Blending our ashes.—Fling, oh, fling
My corse in ocean's booming wave,
Or burn it on the funeral pyre,
But lay it not in reeking grave
To glimmer with corruption's fire !
St. Clara's funeral bell is knelling
With the solemn voice of death,
And far the mournful notes are swelling
While from postern far beneath
Issue the white-robed virgin train;
Chanting low the requiem strain

Over the dark and dismal tomb
Of one in being's roseate bloom,
And one in sallow withered age,
Departed from life's tragic stage.
Where sorrow never wakes to weep,
And ill and wrong distract no more,
And homeless wanderers sweetly sleep,
And hate and pride and pain are o'er,
They lay the vestals finally.
Above them waves a cypress tree,
Intwined with briar and rosemary,
And round them sleep the mighty dead,
Who centuries since forever fled ;
A silent nation gone—alas !
Where living thought can never pass.
The ceremonial pomp is past—
The vestals vanish, one by one—
The holy father is the last,
And even he hath slowly gone.
And stillness reigns o'er all the scene,
That is so peaceful and serene ;
A stillness greatly eloquent
When pious spirits bow and feel
Delicious melancholy, sent
From heaven o'er all their being steal
With purifying breathings mild ;
And they become like little child
Gentle and docile, purely good,
In their communing solitude,
And look from earth to heaven with eye
Of sage reflecting piety,
Comparing man's allotment here
With glories of a brighter sphere.

XI.

O Love! the holiest name in heaven,
The purest, sweetest thing below!
Why are thy joys to torture given?
Thy rapture's unto wailing woe?
Why should thy fondest votaries prove
Faithful even unto death in vain?
Or why, despite thy vows, O Love!
Should all thy blisses close in pain?

No voice was heard—no form was seen
Within the churchyard's lonely bound,
And Dion, from his weedy screen,
Rose mournfully and gazed around.
Long had he watched each lone—lone hour
For some faint note of joy or grief,
'Till destiny's most dreaded power
To him had almost been relief.
But nought allayed his dread suspense
'Till Inez and her murderess
Were borne to that lone mansion whence
No tenant ever found egress.
Then flashed the whole revealment dire
O'er Dion's burning heart and brain,
And death became a wild desire.
A refuge from his penal pain.
With rolling eye, and brow of gloom,
And pallid cheek and trembling tread,
Dion approached the robbing tomb
Where Inez slept among the dead,
And bowed his throbbing head upon
The dark funereal tablet stone
Despairingly, while forth his tears
Unbidden gushed.—"In youthful years

"I little recked of fate like this;
"I thought the world was full of bliss
"And man most blessed in life—Alas!
"I am not now the thing I was;
"And nought remains for me to dare
"But misery, madness and despair;
"The darkness of a breast that bleeds
"O'er the wild thought of damning deeds,
"The doom that never will depart
"From the dim mansions of the heart."
He drew his poniard, looked on high
For the last time with gleaming eye,
Then laid him down the grave beside
And clove his heart! The purple tide
Gushed like a torrent and—he died!
The last glance of his spirit turning
To her for whom his heart was burning.

XII.

The autumnal sun's rich evening beams
Blush o'er Cantabria's billowy sea,
And Lusian fields and groves and streams,
Like angel smiles, celestially;
And clustering vines hang purpling o'er
The shrubbery-mantled palisade,
And golden orange, cypress hoar,
And cork-tree rough, and yew, whose shade
The dead alone doth canopy,
And sunken glen and dim defile,
Alike in nature's bounties free,
Return the soul-inspiring smile
Of Autumn—queen-muse of the heart!
And as soft evening's hues depart,

Like holy hopes that smile in death,
And twilight robes the fading sky
With beauty felt, not seen—beneath
The spreading palm, the lover's eye
Burns as he tunes his soft guitar,
And sees his own dear maid afar,
Approaching her rose-woven bower
To solemnize love's sacred hour.
And lordly prince and shepherd hind,
And lady proud and simple maid
Enjoy alike the season kind,
When flowers grow lovelier as they fade.
Eve shadows dim the varied scene,
And the calm sunlight wanes away,
While one lone cloud of lustre sheen
Still wears the rays of parting day,
And hangs upon the zenith sky,
Like hope the sad heart lingering by.

XIII.

Looming in shadowy twilight o'er
Tajo's broad bay afar is seen,
Scudding toward the Lusian shore,
A quick, unladen brigantine;
And now it grows upon the eye,
White sail, dark hulk, and swan-like prow;
And swells upon the evening sky
Like castle turreted with snow;
And full the rushing wake is heard,
Blent with command's shrill-uttered word,
And many a heart throbs fondly now
To meet its loves and find its home,
As the light vessel crinckles slow
The waters which no longer foam.

The brigantine is moored—the crew
Are busy, boisterous, glad and gay,
And jovial crowds are there ;—but who
Through the dense throng makes rapid way
With looks so proudly desolate ?
'Tis Zulma, who hath borne her fate
And yet will bear 'till being's close,
All she hath lost and still can lose,
With an unshrinking spirit none
Can tame or crush ;—she is alone
In desolation—but she bears
Her lofty brow unblanched, and throws
Around an eye undimned by tears,
And, as she hurries on, she grows
Stronger, as if her spirit stood
Prepared for woe of all degree,
And agony and solitude,
And horror, and deep misery.
With hurried step though tearless eye,
She came, where still the massy towers
Of her own convent rose before her
And cast time's deepened shadows o'er her.
From many a tongue too soon she heard
The fatal story of the past,
Told too with many a needless word,
That fell like Lybia's desert blast.
Zulma shrieked not, but fiercely rolled
O'er brain and heart the worst—the last
Wild storm of ruin ; hope fell dead,
And her high spirit 'neath its own
Intensity was crushed ; she said
Nothing responsive—sigh nor groan,
Nor scream nor cry was heard ; she threw

Her bleeding eye to heaven and bowed
A moment as in prayer—then grew
Like desperation calm.—A crowd,
As toward St. Clara's towers she went,
Followed in mute astonishment
That she should thus defy despair
And her own certain ruin dare.
Soon ceased their marvel—Zulma came
Beneath the window of her cell,
And upward gazed—and sighed the name,
The memory of the victim nun,
The loved, the lost, the lonely one,
Who shed o'er life the only spell
The true heart loves and prizes well.
And as she gazed with mournful eye
On dusky wall and cypress grove,
The soul whose pride could never die,
The spirit of immortal love
That never sheds a human tear,
Was journeying to a holier sphere.

XIV.

"Jesu Maria! who art thou?
"Christ and the Virgin shield us now!"
A war-steed dashes through the throng—
A horseman leaps upon the ground,
And rushes like a maniac strong
Toward dying Zulma, while around
Gather the crowd to mark the scene—
For one so mournful ne'er had been.
Zulma looked up—a faint smile passed,
Like silvery moon-beam on the wave,
O'er lip and eye and then it cast

Behind the death hue of the grave.
Low bowed the horseman, Julian, there,
And fearful was his agony;
He kneeled, like statue of despair,
In hopeless, speechless misery;
But quivering lips and burning brow
Were worse than vain and idle now.
"Zulma"—he said at last, but wild
Came then the memory of his shame,
And Zulma's eye so proudly smiled
He trembled but to speak her name.
For she was calm as all must be
Who triumph o'er the demon—man,
And hold their pride and purity
Above corruption's blight and bann.
But life was ebbing fast away
From Zulma's broken heart and now,
While yet was left a conscious ray
Or never more his words must flow.
He spake at last—his words were few
But full of dark remorseful power,
The out-pourings of the soul's mildew,
That taints each lovely blooming flower,
Making all life a waste!—The fire
Of being, that had sunk and waned
In Zulma's bosom, burned again
Brightly a moment and there reigned
A majesty 'mid all her pain
That daunted Julian, as she strove
To rise upon a maiden's breast;—
"Prince Julian! that thou had'st my love,
"And that in thine I was most blest,
"'Tis bootless now to own; my doom

"Is sealed forever and the tomb
"Must be the resting-place of one
"Who once—who yet loves thee alone ;
"Thou hast my pardon while I live—
"*Forgive thyself as I forgive !*"
Backward she fell—faint grew her breath,
Life left her cheek, her brow, her eye ;
Slow o'er her heart came chilling death—
Zulma is in eternity !

THE HOUR AT WILL.

PART I.

Tis only when the heat and dust and toil
Of day have passed, my better heart can smile ,
'Tis only when in weariness and pain,
My task hath ceased to bind my dizzy brain,
That gentler thoughts and holier feelings come
Like angel visitants, and guide me home—
Home to the hallowed temple of the mind,
Where heaven's own music rolls upon the wind.
And, oh, while wandering 'mid the cold and low,
And mocking Mammon with a smile and bow,
While doomed to wear o'er deep contempt, applause,
And crush my nature 'neath the world's vain laws,
How, like a lost child, seeking home once more,
My bosom brightens, and my soul doth soar !
How, like the eagle of my native clime,
Genius aspires beyond the reach of Time !
Then for a moment, glad oblivion throws
Its deep veil o'er my trials and my woes,

And trickling touches of a kindlier mood,
Like summer evening o'er the ancient wood,
Soothe evil passions, lull the heart to rest,
And blend the spirit with the pure and blest:
And I forget that Fortune is my foe,
And Man the fiend that reigns in human woe:
That lineal hatred o'er my childhood spread
The gloom, though not the slumber of the dead,
And yet prevails to sadden every scene
Where hope and love and loveliness have been.
All these pass from me in the hour of pride,
Like smouldering wrecks down ocean's billowy tide.
With downcast eyes and tiar'd head declin'd,
His gold-wrought purple floating in the wind,
Gazing on valley, forest, stream and flood,
Against a rock the Persian monarch stood;
While, far below, his vassal millions lay
Like bristling tigers couchant for their prey,
Ardent as eagles, joyous as the lark
Whose music melts along the silvery dark,
Full of high hope of conquest, power and fame,—
That golden shroud for every mortal name!
And, as he gazed upon this pomp of power
One trump had summon'd to his palace bower,—
The haughty Despot wept that Time should cast
Their names, like ashes, on the fire-winged blast,
That, ere three-score of hurrying years went by,
His glorious millions,—each and all would die!
Each for himself, philosopher or bard,
Must toil uncheered and be his own reward
Through evils countless as the midnight dews—
The victim votary of the thriftless muse—
Till bursts the sun of Fame's rejoicing day,

And the hours blossom like the buds of May.
And Youth's dim hope out-blazes like a star
High throned in heaven and gleaming from afar.
And flatterers crawl around the honoured one
Mocked when obscure and trampled when unknown!
What recks the world—stern, haughty and austere—
From whose swoln eye slow drops the undried tear?
What recks the world if care and grief assail
The heart that suffers though it will not quail?
If doubt and darkness gather round *his* way,
Whose spirit revels in the light of day?
If, poor and friendless, Genius must submit
And panier'd dullness crush the choisest wit?
If earth becomes, by man's inhuman guile,
A hell, the deeper that the sun-beams smile?
And Mind, new lighted at the throne of God,
Darken and sink and mingle with the sod?
What recks the world, ere wakes the son of Fame,
Who blights and execrates an unknown name?
Or who bands forth a menial miscreant host
And triumphs o'er archangel spirits lost?
—Dark are the shades that cloud thy mortal hours
Poor lonely wanderer from elysian bowers,
And few the joys, earth's silken sons possess,
Light the wild horrors of thy wilderness!

As sable clouds along the evening sky
Glow with the glories of the sun's bright eye,
So the dull toils of daily life assume,
When Genius smiles, the beauty and the bloom
Of unseen realms, where holiest spirits sing
'Mid the fair gardens of an endless spring.
Few and uncertain 'mid the cares of life,

The sin, the sorrow, and the hate and strife,
Are the brief hours devoted to the shrine
Of Love, whose purest worship is divine,
But these quick moments gladden and uplift,
And bear us through the sublety and thrift,
The coldness, darkness, solitude and want,
The woes that wither though they cannot daunt,
Raise and refine the grovelling works of man,
And lead us back where Life in Love began.
Like summer showers, when wanes the burning day,
These hours of pride, athwart our weary way,
Gleam with a mellow gladness and repose,
That strengthen bleeding hearts to bear their woes,
And through all wrong and evil guide us on,
Though poor yet proud, though friendless not alone.
Then fruit and blossom mingle on each tree,
The soul soars gladly and the heart is free ;
Soft airs float by with music on their wings,
And the lyre warbles from a thousand strings ;
The heart's best feelings—all the joys of youth,
Dreams in the green-wood—hope and love and truth,
Thoughts by lone fountains, in their freshest bloom,
And chastened sorrow o'er affection's tomb—
All—all come back and win the soul afar
From earth's dark galley toil and rankling war,
Gild the dense gloom of error, fraud and sin,
And crown the altar of the heart within.

Yet, like wild lightning lifting, fold on fold,
Such awful gloom as wrapt the world of old,
To show how green and beautiful beneath
The earth lies covered with the veil of death,
These high revealments mock the dazzled mind,

Leave, as they vanish, deeper gloom behind,
Melt the touch'd heart that should be proud and stern,
And, like frankincense gushing from an urn,
O'erpower the vision, that should settle on
The thin cold ashes of the dead alone.
With feelings purified and sense refined
And the veil'd glories of a mighty mind,
The bard goes forth, from solitude sublime,
To meet and grapple with a world of crime,
Like a bright seraph in some distant star,
To feel his spirit with his fate at war,
To know his greatness and to bear the scorn
Of the miscreant menials on the dung-hill born,
To walk abroad, with radiant Genius crowned,
While crowded solitude hangs coldly round,
And seek, once more, the muse's lonely room,
And sigh to sink to slumber in the tomb!
Such is, hath been, will be the doom of minds
That cast their glories in the world's vain winds!

PART II.

Stars of the heart! immortal lights that glow
Along life's lone and weary way of wo,
That lengthens, lingers like a pilgrim vowed
To some far shrine he parts from in his shroud,
How soft and soothingly ye come and spread
A blooming veil around the changed and dead,
Like the faint mind, inspire each drooping thought.
And hymn the magic beauty ye have wrought!
There's not a desert on the Earth so drear,
But fountains sometimes gush and gurgle near:

There's not a wilderness so sad and lone
Without its dweller and a kindred one;
There's not an iceberg in the arctic sea,
But bears life, feeling, joy and liberty;
And every heart, however worn and lost
To all it loved and idolized the most,
However pierced and manacled, and cast
A wreck and ruin on life's dewless waste—
Against the storm of grief may still bear up,
Though it hath drained affliction's poison cup,
And smile oft-times and blend its wonted powers
With minds unknown in childhood's leafy bowers,
Such Nature's best; while life prevails, there's hope,
And strength still given with despair to cope—
Despair! oft uttered in a reckless mood,
By earth's victims never understood,
The grim, gaunt tyrant of the fiends who fell,
Born of Remorse—the quenchless fires of hell!
From bosoms dark and rugged gushes forth
Full many a stream to fertilize the Earth,
As from the black rock of the desert poured
The clear cold waters while the host adored;
And they, who walk in wisdom and in truth,
May oft, 'mid strangers, drink the joys of youth,
And find their sojourn gladdened by some voice,
That bids the fainting and sick heart rejoice.
Good, through victorious evil, oft appears,
Justice *may* mark the guiltless suppliant's tears,
Hope may rejoice in happier days to come,
And truth leave not the world in utter gloom.
Man clings to man through every wo and wrong,
And woman wins the daring and the strong.
To all, on whom the heartless world hath laid

Its ban—to all confiding and betrayed
By serpent lures, repulsed and cast aside
By the red Moloch hand of menial pride—
How bright, how cheeringly—the world forgot,
And all the evils of the poor man's lot—
Loved faces smile around their home of Love,
Loved voices breathe the gladness of the Dove,
And sooth the anguish of proud spirits stirred,
By the soft magic of a gentle word!
Passions as dire as winds in wildest wrath
And desolating as the lava's path,
Sink into slumber, broken and subdued
By the low voice of Love's sweet solitude.
Deep hate and wild revenge have oft foregone
Their fixed resolves while some belovod one,
With few kind words and one ambrosial kiss,
Filled a dark bosom with a seraph's bliss.
Laws, manners, morals and traditions old,
And customs antique as the banner's fold,
Fortune and faith—dominion, pride, and power,
And all that magnifies man's scepter'd hour,
Rose up, like spectres, when in secret spoke
Woman—and forth the Persian edict broke!
When War's deep trump awoke the world to arms,
Search out the cause in woman's fatal charms!
When peace flies smiling o'er the bloomy realm,
Lo! angel love directs the monarch's helm!
When the fierce Bandit leaves the work of death,
His wrong'd heart melts beneath affection's breath;
When the blest Sabbath o'er the city throws
A cheerful sanctity and hushed repose,
Gaze on the mother when her children kneel—
Few worship God—but every heart can feel!
When drops the dagger from the madman's grasp,

Who folds his writhing form in love's own clasp,
And with prophetic vows and burning tears,
Leads mind to triumph in the coming years?
Who on the Statesman, in his household bowers,
Bestows the tenderness of youthful hours,
And pillows on her breast the mighty mind
Revered, admired, and dreaded by mankind?
Who shield the weakness, guide the scornful pride,
And sooths—deserted by the world beside—
The bitter sorrows of ambition thrown
On the dark desert of despair alone?
Who casts o'er ruined hope and glory passed
Verdure that breathes and blossoms o'er the waste?
Who, like the sunset of an autumn even,
Gives unto Earth the glorious light of heaven?
Woman, devoted, cheerful and serene,
Lives in all laws and blends with every scene,
Pours proud ambition through each burning vein,
And tends the soldier on the battle plain;
Gives to the poet all his might of mind,
And gilds the desert fancy leaves behind;
Uplifts the feeble, quells the daring, throws
The hues of heaven o'er all desponding woes,
Moves upon earth the pilgrim bound to love,
And mounts, a seraph, to her God above!

Oft, when forsaken, trampled and reviled
While on my solitude no eye hath smiled,
When left to breast and buffet, as I might,
The faithless billows of a stormy night,—
Oft have I found in one beside me now,
(Her of the starry eye and sunny brow)
A tender solace and a mild content
Earth could not give with all her blandishment.

And she hath cheered me with a spirit free
To range the realms of high philosophy,
A heart imbued with such ethereal power
As wraps the saint in his sublimest hour,
While her fair features, soft as twilight's gush,
Lightened and flashed, and, with a solemn rush,
Her words of truth and hope and love came o'er
My heart, like moonlight on a rock-barr'd shore
And I have born the coward's dark attack,
Hate's dungeon ordeal, envy's midnight rack,
The scorn of fools, the sayings of the vile,
The branded felon's hypocritic smile,
The altered eye of friends, the sapient saws
Of dotard pedants, and the moral laws
Of convicts guiltier than the dungeon cell
E'er held in chains, or deepest vault in hell—
With a calm eye, a conscious brow that threw
The reptile back to feed on demon dew.
For still the angel of my pathway said
"'Twere just—but oh, strike not the serpent dead!
"He bears a death—a living scorpion death
"In every pulse and vein and thought and breath,
"Leave him the doom thy righteous hand would end—
"Leave him on earth without a single friend!"
Shall I not praise the wise and winning art
That drew the lightning from my burning heart?
Shall I not feel as time leaves all my foes
In the oblivion of unblest repose,
And on our mingled tides of being run
In little channels glancing to the sun,
That wisdom dwells with loveliness and gives
A hallowed pleasure to our troubled lives,
A conscious trust of happier days in store,
For hearts undoubting, that in grief adore?

Without a fear that truth will not prevail,
Without a glance at slander's thrice-forged tale,
Prizing heaven's gifts too high to boast or vaunt,
Feeling a heart that danger cannot daunt,
And, with contempt ineffable and strong,
Beholding rioters in human wrong,
With thee, my bride !—and thee, my bright-eyed boy!
I share my sorrow—ye partake my joy.
Earth holds a home and coming time a name,
That may not vanish from the roll of Fame!

THE DEATH SCENE.

Glimmering amid the shadowy shapes that float
In sickly Fancy's vision o'er the walls
Of Death's lone room, the trembling taper burns
Dimly, and guides my fearful eye to trace
The wandering track of parting life upon
The burning brow and sallow cheek of him
Whose smile was paradise to me and mine.
The autumnal wind breathes pantingly and comes
With hollow sighs through yon high window o'er
Thy feverish couch, my love ! and seems to sob
Amid the waving curtains as't would tell
My heart how desolate it will become
When left in its lone widowhood to weep
And wail and agonize at Memory's tale.
The outward air is chill, but, oh, thy breast,
My dying love ! is scorching with the fires
That centre in thy heart, and thy hot breath

Heaves sobbingly, like the sirocco gale
That heralds death; and thou art speechless now.
Save what thy glaring eyes can tell, for life
Is parting from thy bosom silently.
Thy pulse is wild and wandering, and thy limbs
Are writhing in convulsive agony,
And, while thy spirit hovers o'er the verge
Of Fate, thou canst not speak to me nor bid
Thy chosen one a long farewell! O Heaven!
Let thy sweet mercy wait upon his end
And life's last struggle close—'tis vain to hope
For life—then take his soul on gentle wing
Away, and let the sufferer rest with Thee!
Alas! hath He who rules the universe
Replied to my wild wish? oh, give me back
The spirit of my love for one brief hour—'tis o'er!
'Tis o'er! my love, my happiness, my hope.
I sit beside a corse! How deadly still
Is the lone chamber he hath left! The moan
Of dying nature, and the bursting sigh
Of a heart breaking, and the murmuring voice
Of a delirious spirit—all are hushed!
The eye that kindled love in my young heart
And told me I was blessed, is lustreless—
And those dear lips, that oft illumed my soul,
Are stiffening now; those features exquisite,
On which I often gazed as on a mirror
Beaming with beauty, genius, feeling—all
That love adores and honor sanctifies,
Collapse in their dread slumbers and assume
The ashen deadliness of soulless dust.
And must it be, my love! that thou wilt sleep
Where I can never watch thy wants and glide
Around, thy gentle minister? No more

Read voiceless wishes in thy pleading eye
And soothingly discharge them? Art thou gone,
Or is it but a dream? O thou dost dwell
Within my heart unchangeably as wont
And ever wilt!—I sit beside the Dead
Alone, while round me the world is bent
On pleasure—on a shadow from the dust!
The bright blue wave of Hudson rolls below
My solitary view and sounds of joy
Fling music o'er its waters and the voice
Of gayety is rising on my ear,—
Like banquet mirth amid the pyramids.
O the full consciousness of utter loss!
The single wretchedness of cureless woe
While all around are gay! The chaos wild
Of billowy thought, on whose tumultuous tides
Hopes, powers and passions—all the elements
Of heart and soul in foamy whirlpools toss
'Till whelmed in ruin!—Lovely babe! thou hast
No father now, and where, my orphan child!
Will close our wanderings? I have no home
For thee, dove of the storm without an ark
To bear thee o'er the waters of the Waste!
Cold, voiceless mansion of my ruined love!
I'll close thine eyes and kiss thy pallid lips.
And watch beside thee for the livelong night—
The last, last night I shall behold thy form!
O agony, and they will bury thee!
Will snatch thee from the pillow of my heart,
And lay thee in the damp unbreathing tomb!
Sleep, my sweet child! thou knowest not the pain
Of the sad bosom that thou slumberest on.
It is some joy that thou feel'st not the loss
Of him who would have worshipped his firstborn.

The world is silent round me ; pale the moon
Gleams on the clay-shut eyes of him who loved
Her gentle light in life, and o'er his cold,
Collapsed, unchanging, melancholy face
Plays her transparent beam of love. My heart!
Thy bleeding tears would drown my soul, if yet
One being lived not in my life to tell
How dear he was to me. Farewell, my love!
Our slumbers now will be no more as wont!
Yet e'en in paradise thou wilt behold
Thine earthly love and bend from heaven to shed
Immortal hopes o'er nature's funeral urn.

* * * * * *

* * * * * *

Days, weeks and months passed o'er me and were seen
Vanishing away with that pale, meek content
Which doth exist, against the spirit's will,
So glad was I to feel that burden, Time,
Dropping from my pierced heart ; for I did live
Among, but yet not with the living—tears
Suppressed within the fountains of the soul,
Congealed like waters in deep cavern-halls.
My being passed 'mid shadows, and the things
Familiar once assumed or unknown form
Or appendage unknown, and to my eye
The faces erst beloved appeared like those
Imagination images in dreams;
And oft I feared to speak, lest I should be
Abandoned to my woe ; and, if I spake,
My voice re-echoed round me like the cries
Of shipwrecked mariners at night. My brain
Was fevered with my dreadful anguish, which
Grew by repression, like the *Rebel Flower*,*

* The Camomile

Until it mastered reason, or whate'er
Name that observant faculty doth bear
Whose power is o'er the visible universe.
There was a dread unmeasured, in my thought,
A vague idea of something horrible,
And I lived on like one in broken sleep,
Forever searching for some lost companion,
And wandering in mazes dark as doom,
Where the heart faints and fails, and hope expires.
Yet amid all the estranging of my love
I still clung to my child; a mother's heart
Retains its deep devotion to her dear
And pang-bought offspring, when the woman's mind
Is laid in ruins; and her bosom burns
With love instinctive for an innocent
And lovely creature whom her spirit knows
Only as something worthy to be loved.
Folding the orphan to my heart, I went
Abroad the mansion witlessly, and searched
Its chambers desolate, and then returned
In wildered disappointment that the thing
I looked for could no where be found.—I sat
In the lone winter nights before the dim
And melancholy embers, and did hush
My breath while listening for the tread of him
Who ever spent his evenings with his love
In social converse;—but he came not, so
I sighed and murmured to my prattling babe
That he would soon return; but then I thought
That he had gone to a far land and left
His duties to my care and faithful watch.
And so I oped his escritoir and saw
His papers, pens and pencils and all things
Disposed e'en as he left them, and I felt

That I could not arrange them otherwise
If they were wrong;—his closet then I searched
And there his vestments hung familiarly
And appositely arrayed.—I returned
From such short wanderings sad, and sometimes thought
My love had told me he should dwell no more
Upon the earth—and then my heart did feel
As if it floated in a lava sea.
Thus passed my strange existence from the day
He died until disease my infant laid
Upon his suffering couch, and I became
His sleepless watcher. Long I sat beside
The lovely one, attending all his wants
And sick caprices uncomplainingly,
Yet all unconscious that he was my son,
Till one said he was dying—then there flashed
Through my dark spirit thoughts long dead, and tears
Quenched the dull fire that burned upon my brain.
And left my heart's fair path a desert way,
Calm though 'twas dreary. Life hath direful ills
And woes and sufferings, but the fiercest lie
In madness, e'er in dread of heaven and earth.
It cannot weep—it doth not think, and yet
It hath both tears and thoughts, the one of blood.
Of pangs the other; all its feelings coil
Like serpents round the heart and sting the core
Unceasingly, and all the sweet ideas
Of love and friendship round the racked brain twine
Like knotted adders, venomous and blind.
Pierce, O thou Holy One! the heart, but spare
The spirit! Let thy judgments fall upon
The affections, but preserve the immortal soul!

My child was spared me ; and the tale I tell
Was gathered from the loved ones who beheld
But could not soothe my agony, and those
Impressions I retain of sights and sounds
That floated by me in bewilderment.

* * * * * *

It was the Sabbath's herald eve ; and pained
With melancholy musings, such as hearts
Bleeding with sorrow nourish, forth I went
To gaze on nature's pensive face and smile
Of virgin softness, and I felt the sense
Of her deep loveliness stealing o'er my woes
While watching her pure countenance, now veil'd
In moonlight and her changeful robes of green,
Azure and silver-blended, while she looked
Like one who was to me what angels are
To paradise—the living fount of joy.
A diamond star was floating 'mid the waves
Of pearl, that danced along the silver wake
Of Dian's bark, and it did seem like love
Adorning innocence ; while in the midst
Of ether hung the rosy isles of bliss,
Where spirits as they bear the hests of heaven
And warder Zion's towers, lift up the songs
That soaring souls forever sing above.
The thought of meeting my beloved again,
Filled all my soul with gladness ; for we part
But for a little season—a brief day,
From earth to heaven, and, like the evening star
Upon the azure verge of summer's sky,
The soul embraceth two eternities.

A sea of voices waked me from my dreams
Of holier spheres, and tol[illegible]ne of the earth

That held in its cold bosom all my loves,
Save one sweet babe, the image of its sire
Upon his lonely widow's heart! O Earth!
Cold is the couch thy sons must sleep upon,
And dark the chambers of their slumber deep.
I looked around me and the vestal moon
Was silvering the waters, o'er which scud,
Swan-like, full many a silent sail bound far,
Perchance, to fathomless eternity!
And dazzling lamps, that seemed in the pale moon
Like crime obtruding his unholy light
Before rose-beaming virtue, glared above
The blushing waters as they laughed in scorn.
And in a sea-dome, studded o'er with lights
That mocked the diamond, many a voice arose
In merriment well feigned, and many a form
Of outward splendour glided round to find
Something to tell how happy all must be
Who woo and win the pleasures of the world.
Like earth's gay hopes, full oft a column rose
Of fire far in the azure vault of night,
And then it burst and vanished! some did watch
The glittering fragments till they fell—then sighed—
And I sighed too—they told me of my joys!
It was no scene for me—the sights I saw
Were once shared with those eyes that wake no more
The voices that I heard were all unknown;
The arm I held was not my wedded lord's!
'Tis bitter to compare our passing years!
The Dead! where are they now? The Living! what
Are they to those whose hearts are in the tomb?

* * * * * *

Slow I returned to my lone room, and kissed
My sleeping child, and looked to heaven—and wept.

DATE DUE

GTU Library
3 2400 00417 1884